

# CHANDAMAMA

FEBRUARY 1986

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Turn to Page 11  
for 'STORY OF  
RAMA'





*"The day I discovered my first pimple,  
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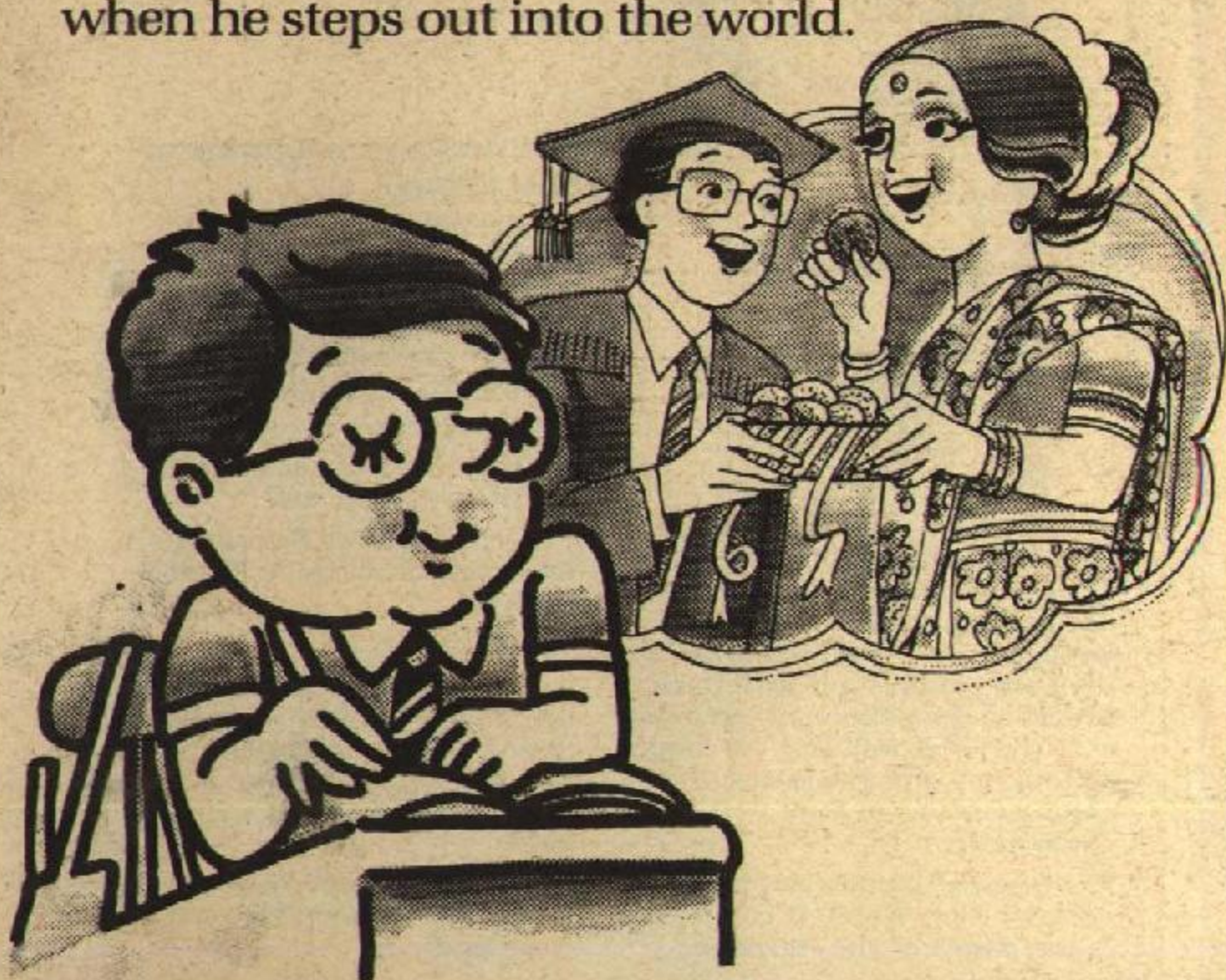
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- *The Bow of Siva in the Story of Rama*
- *Newsflash, Did You Know?, Let Us Know and More!*

**Thoughts to be Treasured**

I may deck myself out in a Raja's dress; but will that make me a Raja? An ass in a lion's skin never makes a lion. Imitation, cowardly imitation, never makes for progress.

—Swami Vivekananda

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# CHANDAMAMA

Controlling Editor: NAGI REDDI

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

## BRAVERY IN DAILY LIFE

As we go to press, we learn about twelve children receiving national awards for bravery for the year 1985. They are in the age-group twelve to fifteen and two of them are girls.

This was an exceptional piece of news in the newspapers, the pages of which are generally filled with news of violence and hatred.

The twelve youngsters symbolise the qualities which sustain us and lead us forward—courage, presence of mind and readiness to risk one's own life to come to the rescue of others in distress. Numerous children have these qualities. They will prove them when the need arises.

What is important is to practise these qualities in daily life, even when there is no situation calling for their visible proof. For example, the quality of courage in one's determination to remain truthful. For, not to be tempted by anything wrong or false is the greatest bravery. To be silently on the side of the truth is real nobility.



मृदघट इव सुखभेद्यो दुःसन्धानश्च दुर्जनो भवति ।  
सुजनस्तु कनकघटवद् दुर्भेद्यश्चाशुसन्धेयः ॥

*Mrdghaṭa iva sukhabhedyo duḥsandhānaśca durjano bhavati  
Sujanastu kanakaghaṭavad durbhedyāścāśusandheyaḥ*

Like an earthen pot which can easily crack and once cracked cannot be easily made whole again, a mean fellow falls out easily and cannot be befriended again. But, like a pot made of gold which does not crack easily and if it cracks it can be mended easily, a noble man falls out rarely and if he does, he can become a friend again easily.

— The Panchatantram







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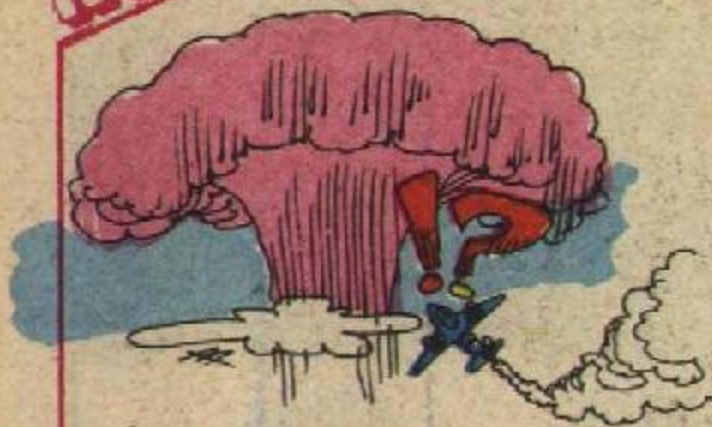




## NEWS FLASH

### The Spectacular Mushroom

Captain Charles McDade of Japan Airlines, flying 25 miles northeast of Tokyo, suddenly found a mushroom growing over the sea. In two minutes it grew into 60,000 feet high and 200 miles wide upsurge of a cloud-like phenomenon. A number of other pilots saw this from safe distances. But what was this? Enquiry has showed that it was not any experiment in nuclear explosion. One possibility is, there was the eruption of an underwater volcano. But that too is only a guess; no proof is there.



### Drunken Birds

400 migrating robins dived into a Californian Highway near Mountain View and got crushed by cars. Investigation showed that they had eaten small pyracantha berries which had become fermented by the unusual weather. The birds were intoxicated and forgot where they were going. The berry bushes have been cut down.



### Crashing of a ship from Space?

On June 30 of the year 1908 a terrible explosion rocked an area in Central Siberia, ravaging 1,500 square miles of land, after a dazzling object came shooting from high. People thought that it was a space-ship from some remote planet.

A Soviet scientist, N. Vassiliev, of the University of Tomsk, who recently did some research on the spot asserts that it was indeed so! The lead collected from the blast site is 11 billion years old, that is, three times older than our earth! A distant star must have sent it long, long ago.

Other scientists say that it was a comet or an asteroid.





## DID YOU KNOW?



The famous film award *Oscar* is not named after any famous man. When the trophy was designed by a sculptor and shown to Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, a lady employee casually observed that the figure reminded her of her uncle, Oscar. A reporter who was present there, wrote that the statuette had been christened *Oscar*, the name lives on!

The twelve most commonly used words in English writings are: *The, of, And, A, To, In, Is, You, That, It, He, For.*



The Great inventor Thomas Alva Edison, had begun to grow deaf at the age of twelve when a railway conductor 'helped' him to get into a train pulling him by the ear!

Blaise Pascal, the French Philosopher and Scientist once locked himself in a room for days together, refusing to come out. When he came out, he had figured out all the geometrical propositions of Euclid, all by himself.



Any Russian growing a beard had to pay a beard tax during the time of Peter the Great.

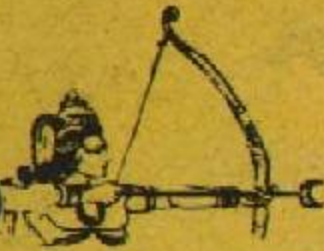
In the Turkey of sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, coffee-drinking was punishable by death.





## STORY OF

# RAMA



—By Manoj Das

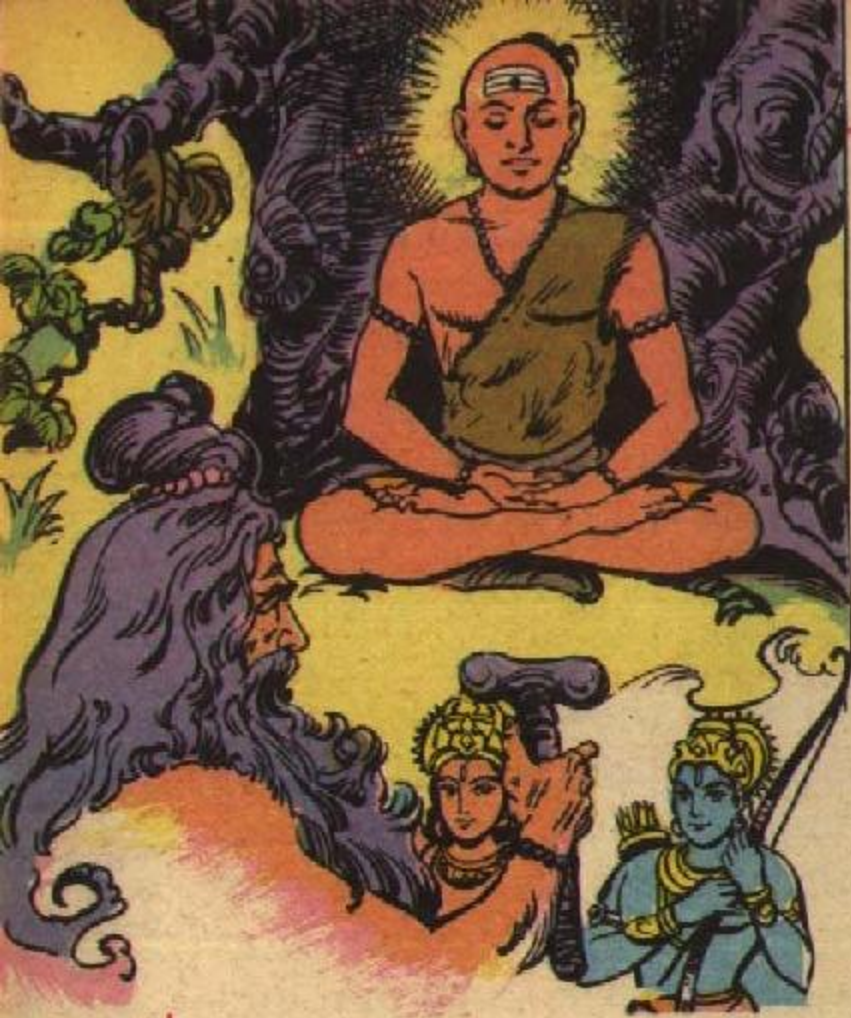
(King Dasaratha was blessed with four sons. His eldest son, Rama, who was remarkable for his valour as well as humility, became dear to all. One day sage Viswamitra led Rama and his younger brother Lakshmana to a forest where a demoness named Tadaka had become the scourge of the innocent. Rama killed her.)

Pleased at Rama's success in killing the terrible Tadaka, Sage Viswamitra offered to him several weapons. Although called weapons, they were in fact certain powers. These powers could assume forms, looking like supernatural beings. One

who was their master could summon them at will. If one weapon could bring down rain, another could make the sky dark. Fire would erupt at the action of a third one and yet another could instantly mobilise and throw at its target a thousand serpents,







so on and so forth.

The sage had mastered them, but being an ascetic, he was not supposed to use them. When, after invoking them, he offered them to Rama, they appeared before Rama in their luminous forms and promised to be at his beck and call.

The earth seemed to heave a sigh of relief with the fall of Tadaka. People had deserted the region years ago, unable to bear the tyranny of the demoness. Now there was hope for their return. The promise of the deserted land becoming a happy human

locality once again was imprinted on nature. No longer did the region shake at the proud laughter and hateful shrieks of the demoness and the helpless screams and cries of her victims.

“O noble sage, what is the name of this new forest we have just entered? It looks beautiful and appears peaceful as if some great soul is presiding over it. Where are we?” asked Rama as they entered a new area.

“This part of the forest is known as Siddhashrama since long. It is here that Vishnu, in his incarnation as Vamana, spent years devoting himself to Tapasya. You know about Vamana, don’t you?”

Viswamitra narrated the episode of Vamana: Once, years ago, a king belonging to a line of illustrious demon-rulers, became very powerful. He even defeated the gods. But he had a great virtue; he never refused anything to anybody. It was difficult to find another king who was as great a philanthropist as Mahabali. His virtue, however, was shadowed by a



vice. He was extremely proud of his virtue

There were also other aspects of his pride. He did not care two hoots for others—men or gods. He was sure that he had the right to have his way, whatever it be.

God does not let pride flourish, particularly in those who are otherwise worthy. Pride blinds one to truth. It was necessary that Mahabali should be humbled. Once when he was performing a Yajna and, on the eve of it, was giving away alms, Vishnu as Vamana, looking like a

dwarfish Brahmin, asked him for space enough to place his feet. Mahabali must have felt offended at the insignificance of the gift begged of him. But once the proud king had asked Vamana to occupy as much land as he needed, Vamana covered both heaven and earth with his infinitely expanding feet. Then emerged a third foot from his navel. The bewildered but brave and determined Mahabali offered his head to serve as the resting place for his third foot. Vamana pressed the third foot down and down







until Mahabali had reached the nether-world.

Viswamitra had chosen this place, sanctified by Vamana, for performing his Yajna. But no sooner did he begin the ritual than the yelling demons came flying and threw bones, flesh and filth and sprinkled blood on the flames. This they did time and again.

Rama and Lakshmana were warmly greeted by the disciples of Sage Viswamitra. They spent the night enjoying their hospitality. In the morning Rama told the sage, "Begin the Yajna now. We will guard it from all

hostilities."

At once the seat of Yajna became lighted and vibrant with hymns. The young hermits heaped around the fire fragrant flowers and leaves. Viswamitra, fresh after bath, sat down, ready to consign offerings into the fire.

Suddenly was heard a sound like a cloudburst. Demons notorious for their mischief, Maricha, Subahu and a few others, began hurling stones into the fire. They were seen ready to pour blood too when Rama shot a powerful arrow at Maricha. The demon was swept away through the clouds and thrown on the distant sea. Next Rama took aim at Subahu who fell down on a hill on the border of the forest, crushing a number of trees and causing landslides. Their lieutenants too were dispelled in no time.

The sages were delighted. The Yajna went on smoothly.

"What is your command to us now, sir?" Rama and Lakshmana asked Sage Viswamitra after the completion of the Yajna.

"Well, boys, I will like you



to see a wonderful thing that is stored in the castle of King Janaka of Mithila. You are a great hero at handling the bow. The thing I have in mind is a bow—a weapon bestowed on the king of Mithila by the gods. It seems that there is nobody in the world who is capable of wielding that bow. Many a prince has tried his hand at it but has retreated, embarrassed.

“The great bow is worshipped by King Janaka with flowers and incense. A glimpse

se of it will be rewarding indeed. Let us pay a visit to the court of Mithila,” proposed Viswamitra.

Rama and Lakshmana told him that they were prepared to abide by his instruction. Thus the three set out for Mithila. The Ashramites, even the birds and beasts living in the Ashram and around it, followed them. Viswamitra persuaded them to return from the bank of the river Sonit.

—To continue







## THE LANDLORD'S GENEROSITY

**P**eople said that anybody who went to the landlord of the prosperous village, Navinpur, returned only after parting with something. Nobody ever returned receiving anything from him.

Shiv Sharma was an astrologer. He moved from place to place and read palms and horoscopes of people. One day he reached Navinpur. After spending three days in the village during which he read the horoscopes and palms of many people, he went to meet the village landlord. He hoped to bag the biggest reward before leaving Navinpur.

People warned him against visiting the landlord. But Shiv Sharma thought, "After all I've nothing to lose even if I do not gain anything!"

The landlord received him with a show of respect. "Welcome Astrologer, sir, I was expecting you. I hear that people are quite impressed by your knowledge of astrology and palmistry. I hope you have not been disappointed with the fees you have received!" he said.

"No, sir, I have not been disappointed at all. In fact I have been amply rewarded for my labour," said Shiv Sharma.

"Good, good, I always advice my people to be generous with scholars like you. In any humble way I also become generous with visitors to my village. Now, will you like to read my palm?" asked a smiling landlord.

"I will be most happy to do so," said Shiv Sharma, happy at the prospect of receiving a generous reward.



The landlord stretched out his palm. Shiv Sharma leaned over it and examined the lines. "Sir, you are noble. Destiny has made you lucky. You will live long too. Will you like to show me your horoscope?" said Shiv Sharma.

"Well, what is your fee for reading my palm?" asked the landlord.

"I charge only three rupees for palm reading. That is from the ordinary people. So far as noble ones like you are concerned, I leave it to their discretion. They give me whatever they please," said Shiv Sharma, sure of a fat fee from the landlord.

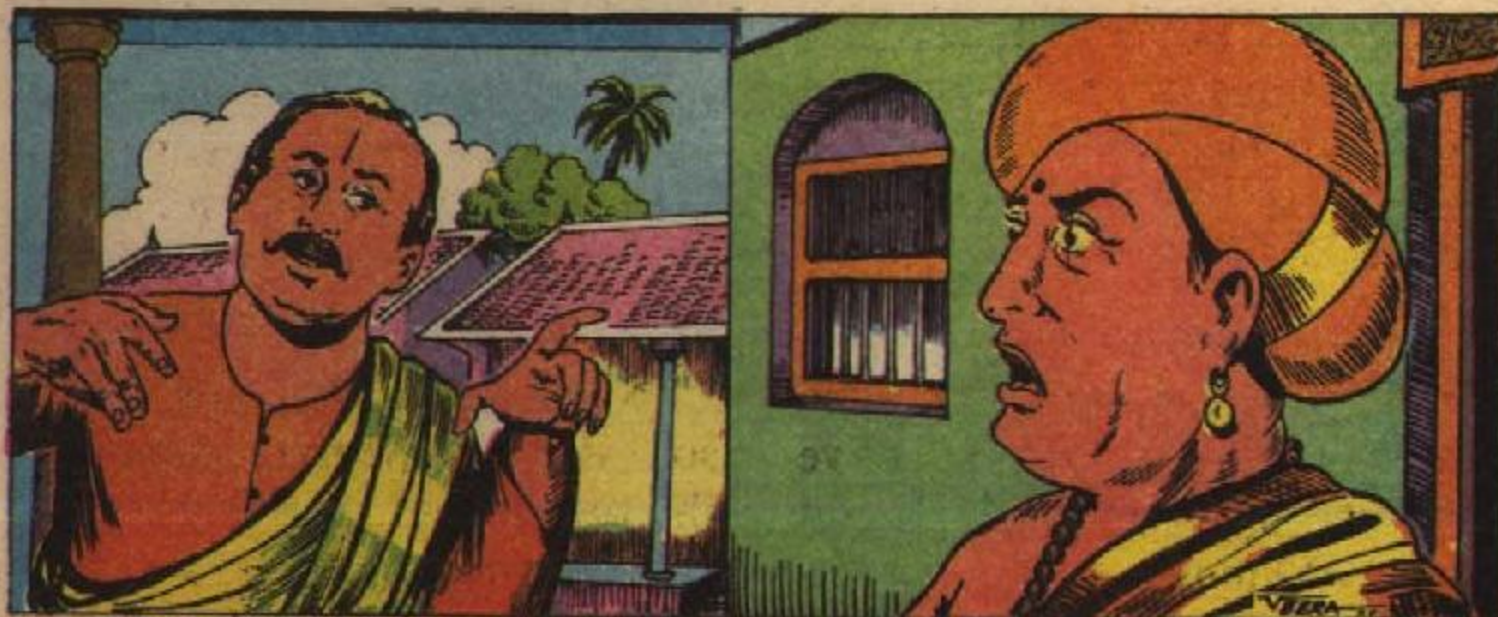
"Only three rupees? That is not much! How much have you earned in my village so far?"

asked the landlord.

"I have nothing to hide from you. I have earned about two hundred rupees so far—from reading both palms and horoscopes," answered Shiv Sharma.

"Neither good nor bad. Now, it is the custom with me, as the landlord, to realise ten percent of the profits made by any outsider in my village. You are to pay me twenty rupees. Now that you have seen my palm, you can take your fee of three rupees plus one rupee as a mark of my generosity and give me the balance of sixteen rupees. I am not interested in showing my horoscope to you," said the landlord gravely.

Shiv Sharma sat speechless for some time. Then with a long sigh he counted sixteen rupees out to the landlord and left.





## BETWEEN YOU AND ME

A famous religious preacher was in the town. The Mayor introduced him to the audience and asked all to follow his teachings.



The speaker, in course of his speech, said, "If you recite a certain verse from the scripture, no dog will bite you." He recited the verse himself.

Next day the Mayor was seen walking with a stick in hand. "Why a stick, sir? Can't you scare away dogs with the verse from the scripture?" asked a passer-by.



"I had better keep a stick with me. Between you and me, all dogs are not well-versed in scriptures, you know" the Mayor said confidentially.





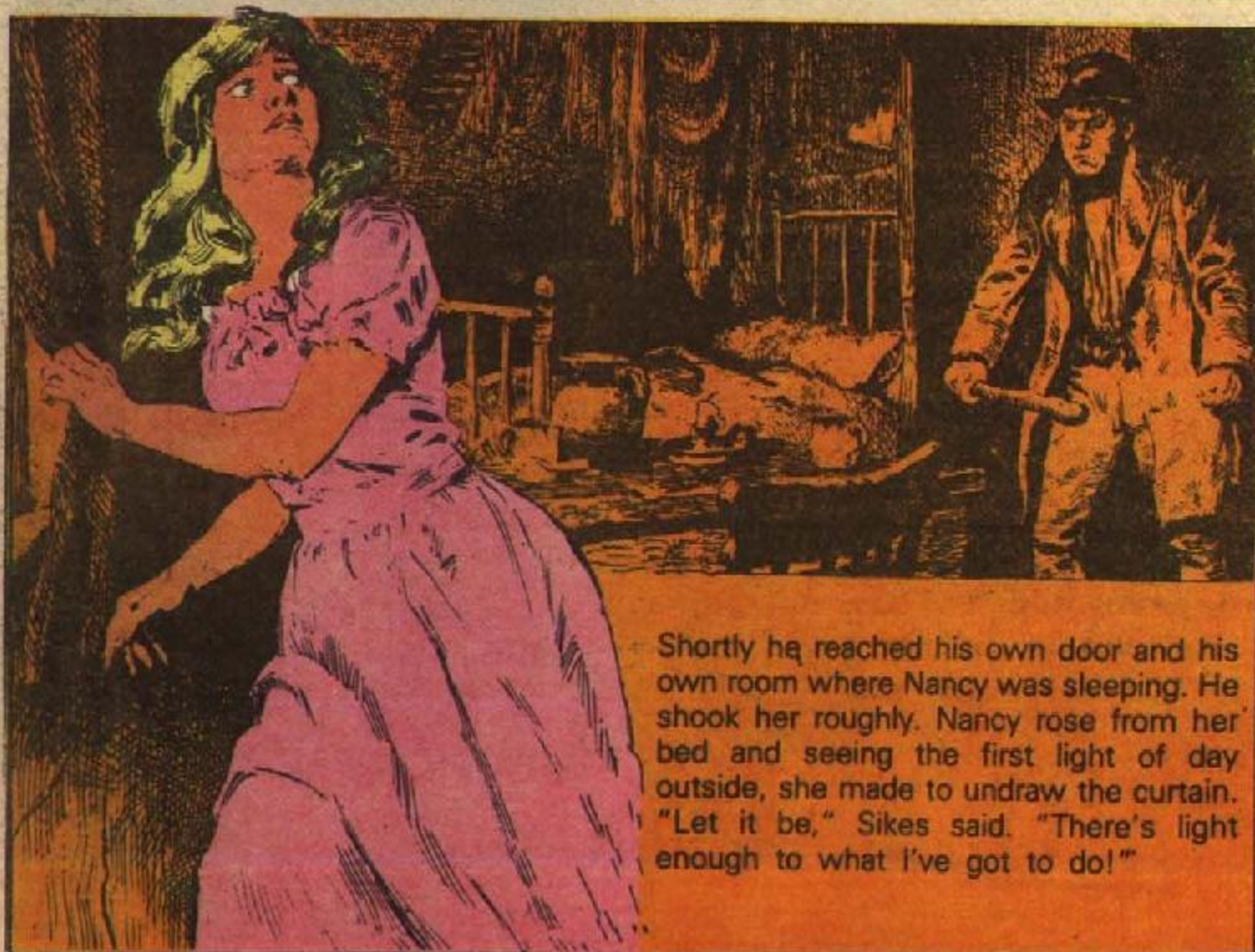
# Oliver Twist



Bill Sikes has found out that his girlfriend, Nancy has betrayed his evil plans to kidnap Oliver Twist. The infuriated burglar, in a fit of rage, exacts a terrible revenge by murdering her...



Fagin stared hard at Sikes. Then he went over to the sleeper and roused him. "Tell him about Nancy. Tell him how you followed her to London Bridge. Tell him what you saw and heard there." Sikes listened to everything that was to be told. Then he turned and left. Presently, Fagin saw him dashing along the silent street.



Shortly he reached his own door and his own room where Nancy was sleeping. He shook her roughly. Nancy rose from her bed and seeing the first light of day outside, she made to undraw the curtain. "Let it be," Sikes said. "There's light enough to what I've got to do!"





"You were watched tonight," Sikes said. "Everything you said was heard." The girl realised that all was lost. "Spare my life," she sobbed and sank to her knees as Sikes advanced to her. "For your own sake, stop before you spill my blood..." It was then that Bill Sikes struck her down...

The murder done, Bill Sikes fled. Haunted now by the enormity of his deed, he walked for hours until his back was to London. In all his aimless wanderings, he was followed by his dog.



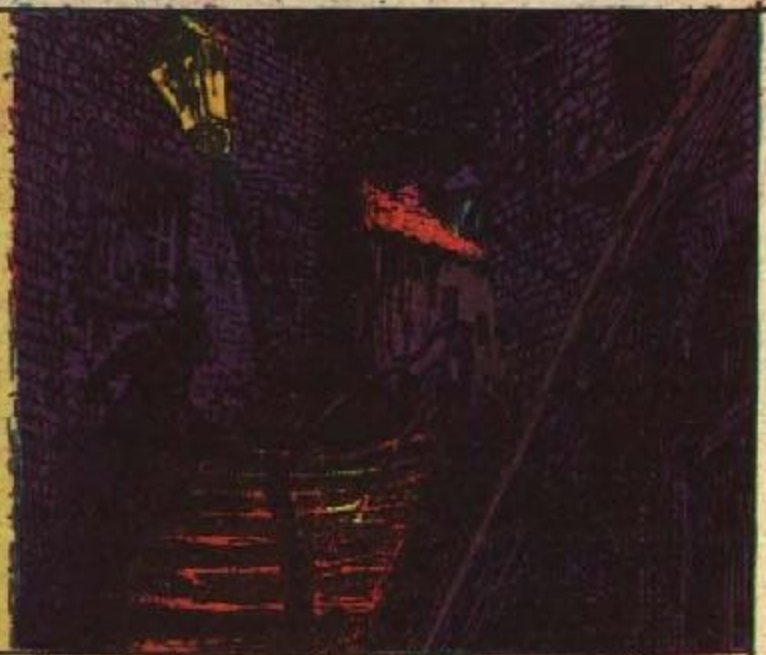
But suddenly he took the desperate resolution to go back to London. "I'll find a place to lay by for a while until Fagin can lay his hands on a boat to take me to France," he thought. He turned his gaze upon the dog. It was well known to everyone, and could lead to his capture.





He resolved to drown it, and walked on, looking for a pool, packing up a heavy stone and tying it to his handkerchief as he went. He halted finally at the brink of a pool. He turned then to the animal and called to it, but seeming to know what was in its master's mind, it turned and scoured away at its hardest speed.

In the neighbourhood beyond Dockland, stands Jacob's island. It is a creek from the Thames, where roofless and empty warehouses stand, and it was to here that Sikes eventually came, seeking shelter.



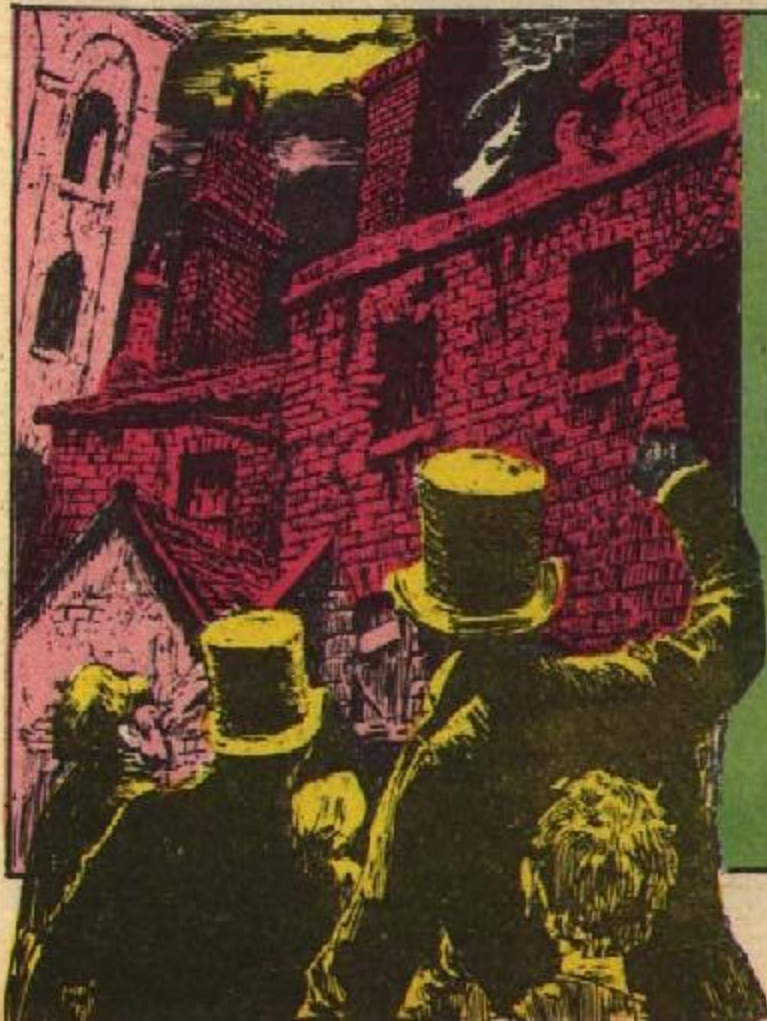
In one of the houses, long since abandoned by normal human beings, were three criminals, including Toby Crackit, who had played some part in Oliver Twist's misfortunes. Their circumstances were such that they were now forced to live in this loathsome area. It was to their house that Bill Sikes had come.





While Sikes was presenting himself to his old friends, who were none too pleased at seeing him, a passer-by had arrived outside the house.

Nancy's body had, by then, been discovered, and already a reward of £ 100 had been offered for catching Bill Sikes. It was for this reason that the passer-by, on seeing his lurcher, hurried off immediately to bring help. Within minutes, a noisy crowd had gathered outside the house.



"The tide!" cried the murderer. "I saw the tide was in when I came here. Give me a rope, so that I may go to the back and drop into the creek." A rope was produced and Sikes fled to the roof of the house, where he was easily seen by those below.

—To Continue





## LEGENDS AND PARABLES OF INDIA

### THE 'OLD' WISE JUDGE

One of the famous kings of the Chola Dynasty was known as Karikala. It was a strange name indeed, for the word meant one whose foot was burnt. People called him by this name because when he was a little boy, the house in which he slept had caught fire. All around it thought that he would perish. But he made a daring bid at escape and succeeded in it, though one of his legs got partially burnt in the process. Karikala ascended the throne when quite young. One day he put on the disguise of a farmer and roamed about in the village to see for himself how the peo-

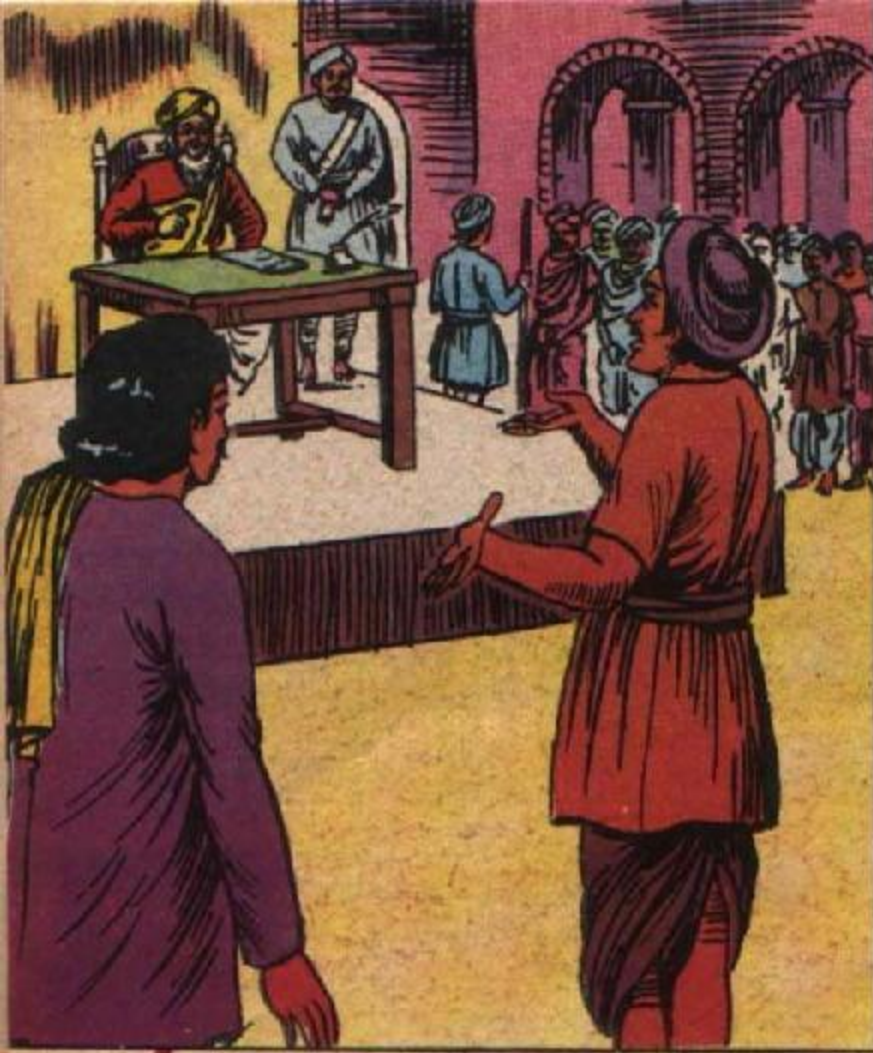
ple fared. Passing through a field he heard two villagers talking about him. One said, "I don't mind going to the king and presenting our case before him. But the king is young and inexperienced. Can we expect any sound judgment from him?"

"I too have my doubts about him. Anyway, let us see what he says about our problem. Let us proceed to the court tomorrow," said the second villager.

The young king was quite amused. As expected, the two villagers met him the next day and presented their case before him. That amused him even more, for it was an unusual







case.

The first villager had sold a plot of land to his neighbour. While clearing the land of the ruins of an old house, the buyer discovered a buried jar filled with gold coins. He carried it to the seller of the land and said, "This is yours, for I bought only the land from you, not this!"

But the seller of the land refused to accept the wealth. "Once the land has become yours, all that was there also has become yours. I have no claim to the buried property," he said.

The buyer of the land was not convinced with his neighbour's argument. Thus, they had come

to the king.

The king heard them with patience and then said, "Look here, yours is a case which must be judged with caution and prudence. I am too young to have such virtues. Come back day after tomorrow. I shall ask an old and experienced judge to solve your problem."

The two villagers went away, looking at each other meaningfully.

When they returned after the interval of a day, they were directed to a hall where they saw an old man seated as the judge. The villagers reported their case to him. The judge listened to them with great attention and said, "I am extremely happy with both of you. I must say that both of you are right in your attitudes."

Then, looking at the first villager, he asked, "Is it true that you have a son of marriageable age?"

"Yes, sir," replied the first villager.

"Is it true that you have a daughter of marriageable age?" he asked, looking at the second villager.

"I have, sir," replied the second villager.



"I have a feeling that they like each other. I suggest that you arrange for their marriage and hand over the jar to them. Let the property be theirs!" said the judge.

The two villagers remained looking at the judge for a moment. Soon their eyes glittered with joy. "What a wise and delightful judgment!" they exclaimed together. In his excitement, one of them spoke out, "Had I not said that our case should be tried by some old venerable judge and not by the young king?"

"Yes, you had said so and I had agreed with you," said the second villager and they embraced each other.

But the surprise of their life awaited them. The old judge, before their eyes, got changed into their young king, by shedding his beard and removing his turban! They stood speechless.

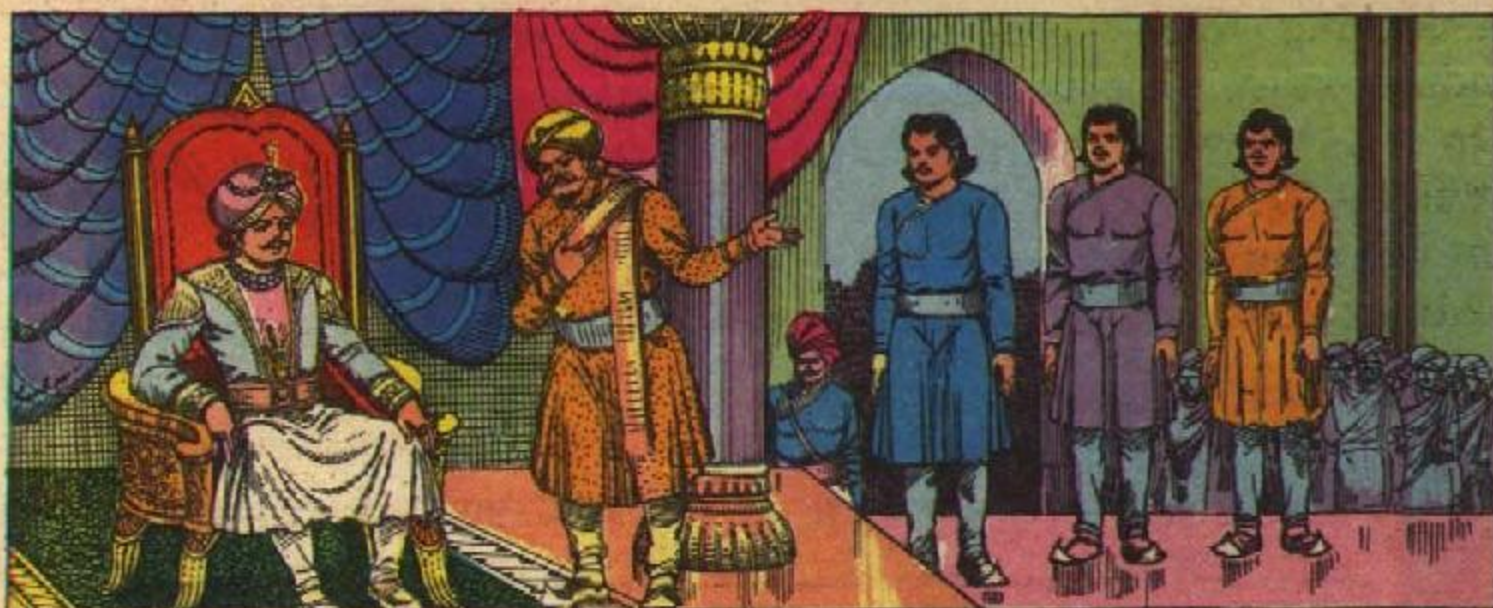
"Goodbye, friends. Now that you are satisfied with the judgment, I hope it matters little whether the judge was young or old. Am I right?" the king asked, laughing.

Needless to say, the king had gathered whatever information he could during the previous day and had hit upon the right solution.

The villagers after apologising to the king for their wrong ideas about him, took leave of him, happier than ever!







## THE MINISTER'S CHOICE

Long ago, the king of Prathishthan had a wise minister named Sudarshan.

One day, the governor of one of the regions of the kingdom suddenly died. A new governor had to be appointed.

Those eligible for the position were invited to the court. They were interviewed by Minister Sudarshan. Out of the numerous candidates only three were chosen for the final round of selection. They were Jayant, Sunil and Sudhakar.

But, how was the minister to choose the best of the three? He thought for a whole day and then on the next morning called the three young men to the

court.

"Gentlemen," he said, "here are three cats—one for each of you. You rear them and at the end of three months bring them back to the court. For your expenses in keeping the cat, you may take from the royal treasury a thousand silver coins each."

At the end of three months, Jayant, Sunil and Sudhakar returned to the court with their cats.

Jayant's cat had grown fat and the people in the court thought it to be more of a wild cat than a domestic one. Sunil's cat was healthy and active. Sudhakar's, however, looked weak and



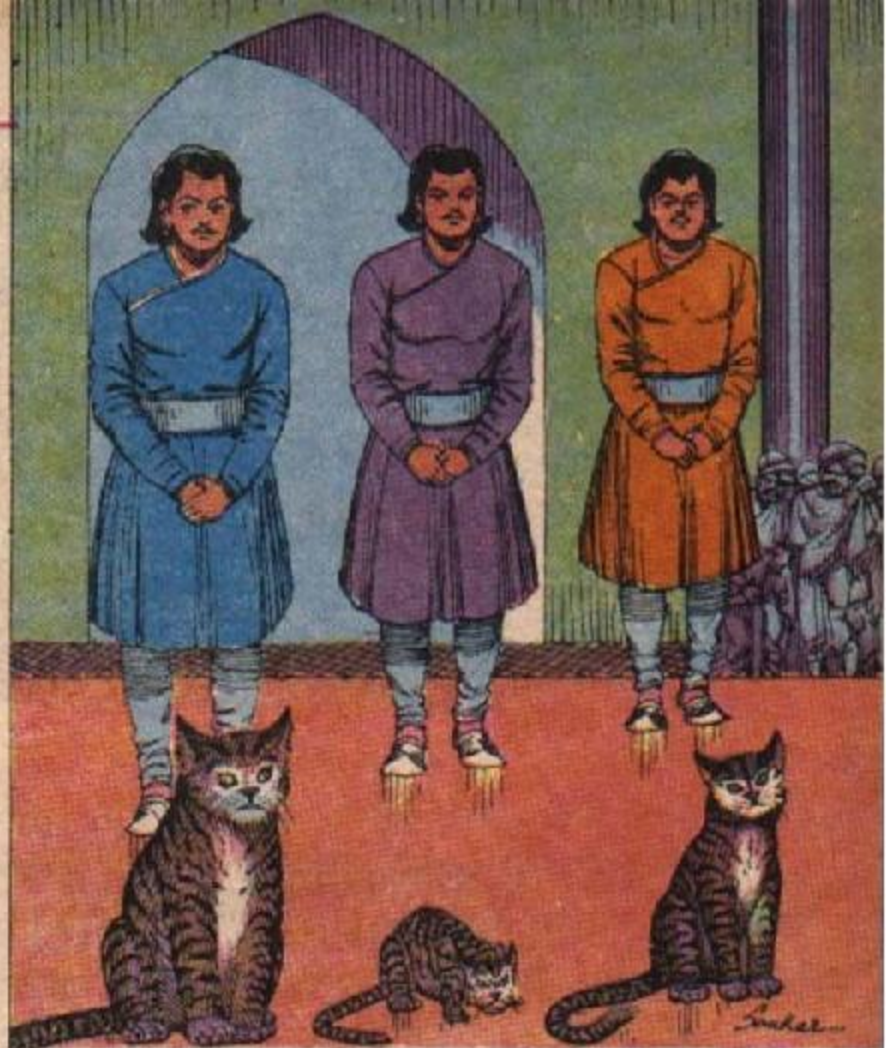
sickly.

Jayant reported, "Sir, I fed my cat daily on pure milk and fresh fish and looked after all its comforts. I've spent on its food and other cares only five hundred silver coins. Here are the remaining five hundred." And he gave to the minister a pouch full of coins.

Sunil said, "I left my cat every night at a friend's godown where there are many rats. I wanted the cat to enjoy its natural food. But, every morning, when it returned to my house, I gave it some milk. That is because if by chance it had failed to catch a rat the previous night, it should not go hungry. I spent only a hundred coins on it and here are the remaining nine hundred coins."

Sudhakar said proudly, "Sir, I've not spent a pie on the cat. What use is a cat except for catching rats? I left it in my vast garden to take care of itself and it has lived all right! I return the one thousand silver coins you had given me."

The minister listened to their reports and thanked them and asked them to go away. A little later he informed the king and the court of his choice. It was



Sunil who was to be appointed as the governor.

People in the court were surprised. They requested him to explain how he selected Sunil for the post.

"It was not a difficult choice at all," replied the minister. "Jayant spent a considerable amount of money in maintaining the cat. He has no idea of how to utilise people's money in a proper manner. So he is unfit to govern the people."

"Sudhakar looks at everything from the point of bare utility and he has no feelings for a creature under his care. How







can we put such a person in charge of a region?

"Sunil has both human feelings and a proper idea of expenditure. He has helped his friend to get rid of the rat menace in his godown. At the same time, he has been very

kind and considerable towards his cat. One with such noble qualities is the right person to become a governor."

Sunil was duly appointed to the post and sent to his place of work. The courtiers praised the minister for his wise choice.

Leo Tolstoy, the great Russian writer, was crossing the street when he saw a poor man who looked starved.

Tolstoy searched his pocket in vain and said, "Sorry, friend, I've nothing with me to give you!"

"You called me friend! What more precious gift could you have given me than your friendship?" exclaimed the poor man.





## HALF OF THE PROBLEMS SOLVED

Ramu met his childhood pal, Pintu, after many years.

"Hello Ramu, I hear that you have grown very rich!" observed Pintu.

"What you've heard is correct. But I have a problem. I'm suffering from back-pain," replied Ramu.

"I will send you a bottle of tonic a month. Take it daily for six months. It will cost you five hundred rupees a month. I don't wish to make any false claim. But between you and me, at least half of the problems will be solved," assured Pintu.

From the next day the treatment began. Pintu sent bottles of tonic and Ramu paid the bill every month.

Six months passed. The two friends met. "Pintu!" said Ramu, "Nothing happened. My problems continue to be there."

"I thought so," said Pintu. "Had I not said that between us half of the problems will be solved? Well, I needed that much money for the last six months. That was my problem. That was solved. Now, I think, you should consult a physician."







## THE FOURTH NIGHT

**S**hivram was the priest of the Kali temple at Jholapur. He performed his duties with utmost devotion and the people of the town respected him very much.

Shivram's wife, Karuna, however, was a very quarrelsome lady who made his life miserable. He had to bring her whatever she wished for. If he failed to fulfil her desire she would not only quarrel with him but also refuse to cook for him. In order to avoid such scenes Shivram tried his best to satisfy Karuna's demands.

One day Karuna asked for the jewellery of the deity in the temple. Shivram was shocked;

he had never expected that his wife would ever dare ask for such a thing.

"Have you lost your senses, you foolish woman?" shouted Shivram. "Even to think of such a thing is a sin. How could you ask for the Devi's ornaments?"

But Karuna was stubborn in her demand. "If you do not bring me the ornaments by tonight, I shall commit suicide by morning," she threatened.

Shivram knew his wife's stubbornness. He left the house immediately and went to the temple. Late at night, after finishing all his duties, Shivram kneeled before the deity and said, "O Mother, you know very



well my dilemma. If I do not give my wife your ornaments, she is sure to commit suicide by morning. How can I let such a thing happen? Please let me borrow your ornaments. I shall return them to you in four days."

Shivram then took out one by one the deity's ornaments and put them in a box. He then closed the door. As he was about to step out of the temple, he heard a dialogue coming from inside the deity's chamber.

"Mother, you saw Shivram stealing your ornaments. Yet you kept silent. What is the reason?" another goddess who had just entered the temple asked Kali.

"Shivram is a great devotee of mine," replied Goddess Kali. "That's why I've allowed him to take the ornaments. Moreover, he has promised to return them within four days. If he doesn't, then whoever would be possessing my ornaments on the fourth night would die!"

Shivram was frightened on hearing the deity's warning. He rushed home and giving the ornaments to his wife, narrated to her all that he had heard.

"You are a coward and a liar.



You are inventing all these stories because you want to take back these ornaments from me! You can be sure, I shall never return these," said Karuna haughtily.

Shivram lived in constant fear for three days. On the fourth day he requested his wife, "It is for your good that I am asking you to return the Devi's ornaments. Otherwise, you shall die!"

Karuna did not pay any heed to what her husband said. She went to bed keeping the bundle of ornaments under her pillow.

Shivram rushed to the temple and prayed, "Mother Kali, have





pity on my wife. Recover your ornaments yourself and pardon my foolish wife."

At midnight, a thief, who was on the prowl, managed to enter Shivram's house. He went into their bedroom and stole the bundle of ornaments from under the pillow. Quietly, he again slipped out of the house.

The thief went straight to the temple with the intention of stealing the deity's ornaments. But, he was surprised to see that the door of the temple was wide open. He looked around and saw that someone was hiding behind a pillar. He jumped on him and caught hold of him.

"You rogue! You stole a march on me, is that so? You have already stolen the deity's ornaments? How dare you come into my territory?"

And, there was a terrible fight between the two.

Towards early morning Karuna woke up and was shocked to find that her ornaments were gone. She woke up her husband and told him about the calamity.

Shivram, trembling with fear, ran to the temple. There, he was shocked to find two men lying dead. Shivram guessed what had happened.

He picked up the ornaments that lay between the dead men, went to the deity and prayed. "Mother Kali, your grace is immense. I shall be ever grateful to you for having saved my wife."

Just then, his wife, Karuna, came running into the temple.

"Look Karuna, did I not tell you that if you did not return the ornaments by the fourth night, you shall die? See, the thief who carried them on the fourth night has been punished instead and your life has been spared by the goddess," explained Shivram, tears rolling down his cheeks.





Karuna realised that the goddess had showered upon her immense Grace, because of her husband. "Mother Kali, I've been ignorant and selfish till now. Forgive me for what I have been. From now on, I too, like Shivram, shall dedicate my life

to you," prayed Karuna.

By then it was morning and the temple guards came and removed the bodies of the two thieves.

After that day, Karuna joined her husband in serving Goddess Kali.

## SPOT THE TEN DIFFERENCES





## THE 'FLOWER' THAT ISN'T

**With their tentacles waving seductively in the water, sea anemones look like beautiful plants. But they are poisonous animals with the ability to stab and paralyse their victims**

**C**ORAL reefs spell home to thousands of different kinds of fish. But there are many other animals to be found in and around the coral. And many of these are as dangerous as the scorpionfish.

One such creature is the sea anemone, which looks like a colourful and exotic underwater flower. But there the resemblance ends.

Firmly anchored to the coral, the sea anemone is a poisonous menace to a host of small fish and other marine creatures. What look like flower petals slowly swaying from the top or the head of the anemone are, in fact, poisonous tentacles.

Unlucky are the small fish attracted by the tentacles and foolish enough to investigate. Within a split second the tentacles stab out and inject into the fish a poison that paralyses it. The victim is then devoured.

The tip of each tentacle, known scientifically as a *anematocyst*, is rather like the hypodermic needle used by a doctor to give a patient injections. The poisonous fluid injected by a sea anemone is something of a mystery because, although deadly to some fish, it has no effect on others. When, for example, a clown fish is chased by a hungry enemy, it dives deep into the nearest anemone where it hides in safety deep amid the tentacles. The fugitive is stabbed by the tentacles, but suffers no harm. In return for this protection, the clown fish provides the anemone with a meal by luring into the tentacles the fish that chased it there.

Although sea anemones pass most of their existence firmly anchored to coral reefs, they occasionally move to a new anchorage by means of a creeping or crawling motion. Anemones are seldom bigger than 20 centimetres across, but there is one giant species found among Australian coral which measures one metre across the top.

Sea anemones have remained anchored to the same piece of coral for as long as 30 years. Other specimens have been known to flourish in laboratory tanks for 80 years, but no one has yet established with accuracy just how long an

anemone lives.

Some marine biologists, the scientists who study life in the sea, believe that some anemone species may have a life span of 300 years. That would make the anemone the longest-living animal in the world today.

Sea anemones owe their longevity to the fact that they have few enemies. Occasionally a fish immune to anemone poison will nibble off a tentacle or two, but new tentacles soon grow to replace those that have been lost.

There is more than one way in which an anemone reproduces itself. Some produce eggs which hatch into larvae and these develop into adults. Others simply split into new anemones.

Coral reefs also swarm with crustaceans, that family of animals which includes prawns, lobsters and crabs. A common member of the coral community is the hermit crab, which makes its home in the discarded shell of a mollusc.

The hermits differ from other crabs in that they have no true shell of their own. Their abdomen is covered by soft, vulnerable tissue which would make it an easy meal for an alert predator. So they push the abdomen into a shell, leaving only their powerful limbs and claws exposed.

Another crab, and one which lives exclusively in the coral, has even stranger habits. This is the coral-gall crab, of which species the female spends the whole of her adult life trapped inside the coral itself.

For the first few weeks of her life, the female coral-gall crab wanders about like any other member of the crab tribe. Then she settles down and sets up house in a fork formed by two branches of coral.

The presence of the crab irritates the branches of live coral, encouraging them to curl inward as they grow. Then, as the coral steadily increases around the crab's body, she becomes enclosed in a coral prison.

Although the crab never leaves the coral cell, she does not starve. Water flowing through openings in the coral walls carry plankton, the microscopic creatures on which she feeds. Some openings are large enough to admit the tiny male coral-gall crabs and allow them to mate with her.

One of the most extraordinary creatures found among coral reefs is the starfish. There are about a thousand different species of starfish and they range in size from midgets one





centimetre across to giants with a span of one metre. Most species have five arms; some have 44, others none at all.

On the underside of each arm of a starfish there is a groove equipped with several rows of small, hollow cylinders. These are the starfish's feet. At the tip of each foot there is a sucker which helps the animal to get a grip as it moves along the seabed.

Each foot is connected to a system of tubes. The tubes contain water which the starfish pumps into its own feet to move them about. The creature then moves along by pushing out its feet one after the other.

starfish, with its unfailing energy, always wins in the end. Instead of pulling with all its suckers at once, it works them in "shifts" such that only a third of its suckers are used at any one time. The remainder are resting and waiting to take over, resulting in a relentless attack which the shellfish cannot survive.

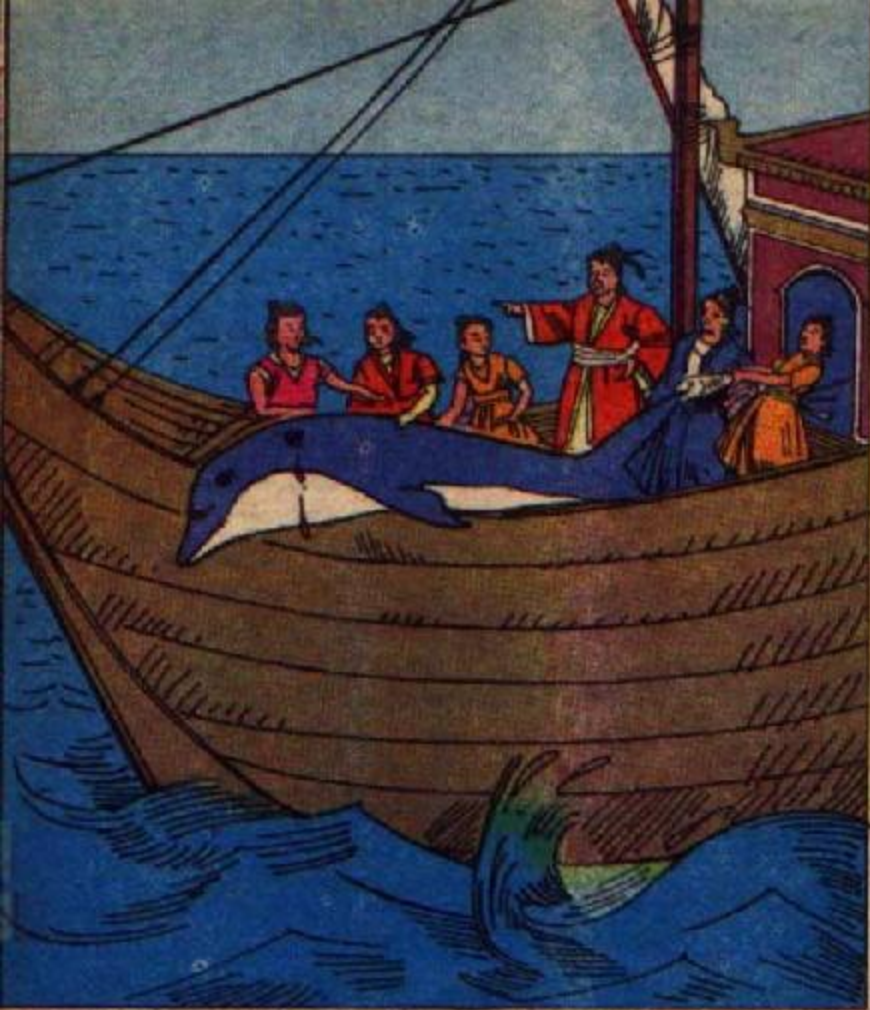
Once the starfish has forced a double shell apart, it turns its stomach inside out and through its mouth to devour the opened shellfish. Digestion of the meal, therefore, takes place outside the main body of the starfish. Dinner over, the starfish moves off.

Starfish feed on shellfish and have surprisingly little difficulty in opening them. When a starfish wants a meal of mussels or of oysters, it simply straddles itself across its victim. Five double rows of tiny suction cups along the underside of the starfish body grip the "winged" shells of its prey and exert a steady pull until the two halves of the shell are forced apart.

This action can take as long as 24 hours. The







A Folktale from China

## THE STRANGE DOLPHIN

pleaded for their lives. The General conceded to his request and returned the dolphin and the fish to the water, after Chen had tended to the dolphin's wound.

A few months passed before Chen had an urge to sail once again. He had sailed some distance when the weather suddenly became bad and tossed the boat up and down. Soon, it sank. Chen caught hold of a raft and, after floating on the waves for a long time, reached an unknown shore.

He saw a beautiful forest, filled with wonderful shrubs and flowers. As he walked he came upon some charming damsels. Hiding behind bushes he followed them till they reached a clearing. There he met a boy holding a hound. The boy told him that this was a hunting group from the palace and cautioned Chen that he had better leave the place. Otherwise he might be killed.

Chen, a handsome young Chinese scholar, was a wonder with poetry. But poetry did not earn him much money. So, he decided to find a job so that his parents could live more comfortably. After a long search he found employment on a navy general's staff as a secretary.

One day, out on a cruise, the General took up his bow and wounded a dolphin. It was brought on board. Surprisingly, there was a small fish hanging on to the tail of the dolphin and however much the crew tried, they could not separate it from the dolphin. The pitiful sight moved Chen very much and he



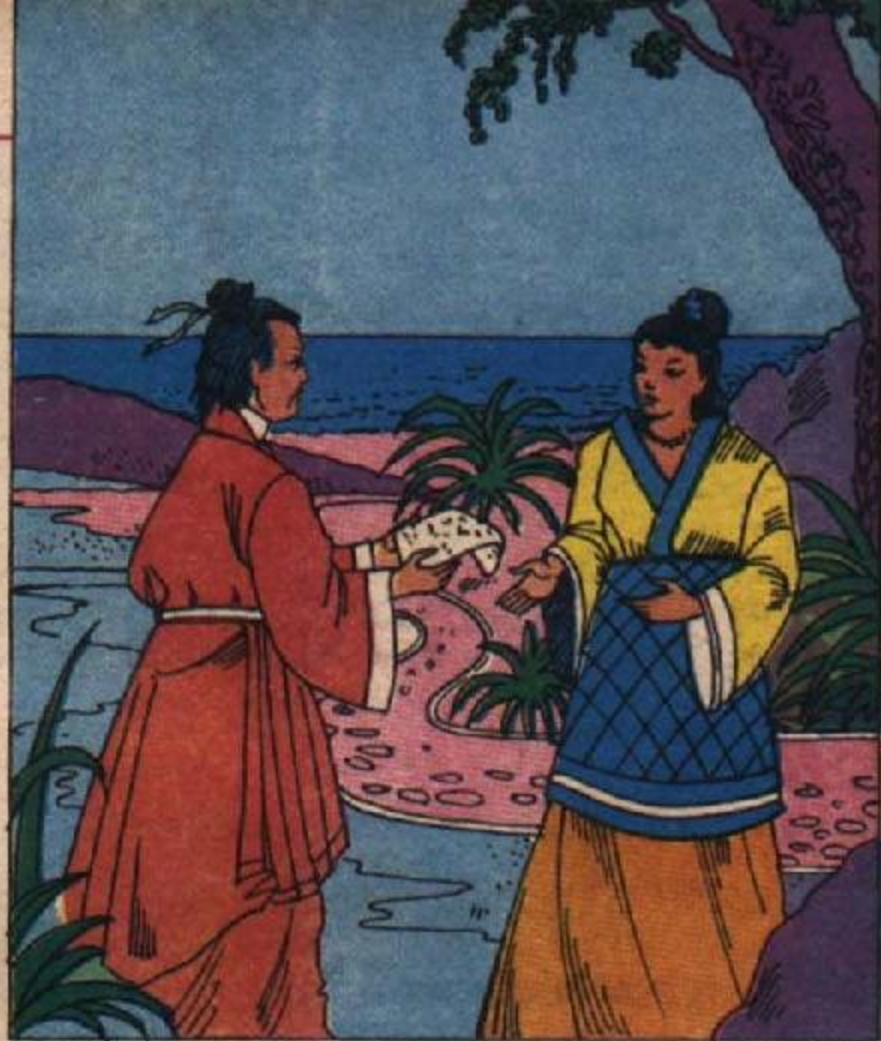


Chen went away and a little later reached a building which he took to be a monastery. He went in. It turned out to be a grand palace. He lost himself in its maze. Soon the hunting group reached the place and its members began frolicking in the lovely garden of the palace. Among them Chen spied the beautiful princess. This frightened him even more, for what punishment will she pronounce against him if he is found out?

As the group passed by him, he saw a red handkerchief fall on the floor. He picked it up and wrote a beautiful poem on it.

A maid who happened to pass by saw Chen. She snatched the handkerchief from Chen and she was aghast to see the writing on it. It was a handkerchief carried by the princess all the time. The maid went into the hall to show it to the princess. Chen was very frightened.

After some time the maid came out carrying some food for Chen and passed on to him the message that the princess had forgiven him. Chen spent the night there. As he got up he saw the maid hurrying towards him. He was puzzled. He was told



that the queen had chanced on the handkerchief and that she was furious. He was further cautioned that some royal guards were coming to take him prisoner. Chen turned ashen and knew that there was no escape for him.

Just then another maid, passing by, saw him and exclaimed, "Oh! I have to tell the queen." And she rushed away. The strange behaviour of the maid was a riddle to Chen.

When Chen was finally escorted to her Majesty, instead of finding a furious queen he faced one in good spirits.

Chen pleaded for forgiveness,



told her his story and fell on his knees. The queen told Chen that he was pardoned and requested him to forgive her for having frightened him.

Chen was surprised at the queen's attitude. Seeing the amazement on Chen's face, the queen told him that as the king of their kingdom was away she had to be careful of strangers. Then she added that it was the second maid who had saved him from being executed. Chen was even more puzzled. The queen went on to say that some time back she had changed herself into a dolphin and her maid had become a small fish. On her way back to the palace when she was wounded it was Chen who had tended to her wound and pleaded for her life. The second

maid, on seeing him, recognised immediately and told the queen about the stranger.

Out of gratitude the queen then asked Chen what he wanted as a gift. He looked towards the princess but could not tell the queen that he would like to marry her! The queen understood Chen's mind. She knew too that the princess had taken a liking for the handsome poet. She brought about their marriage which was conducted with due pomp and ceremony.

Thereafter Chen regularly met his parents with many gifts, to help them live in a grand manner. But nobody knew how Chen had got those riches since the queen had asked him not to tell anyone.

*Retold by Sunanda Reddy*







New Tales of King  
Vikram and the Vampire

## DREAM AND REALITY

**D**ark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time. At the intervals of the moaning of jackals and the roars of thunder could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning showed fearful faces.

But King Vikram swerved not. He climbed the tree once again and brought the corpse down. However, as soon as he began crossing the desolate cremation ground with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse said, "O King, no doubt you are a man of conscience and courage. But these qualities alone cannot bring success in life. One has to be intelligent too. The pity is, some times even conscientious and courageous people conduct themselves like fools. Let me give you an example. Pay attention to my narration. That might bring you some re-





lief."

The vampire went on: Once upon a time there was a prosperous merchant in the city of Pataliputra, Dayanand by name. He was once out on a pilgrimage with his family, in the company of another couple. The couple got killed in an accident. The couple had a young son named Abhay. Dayanand and his family returned home with Abhay. Abhay lived with them and grew up to be a young man.

Abhay was treated with kindness, but his status was that of a servant. Abhay resented this.

The young man was ambi-

tious. Often he indulged in day-dreams or idle fancies. He imagined that he had become very wealthy and Dayanand stood before him with hands folded!

One afternoon, while nobody was near his room, he lay on his bed and spoke, as if a dialogue was going on between Dayanand and himself.

"O noble young man, be kind to me and accept the hand of my only daughter, Sushila, in marriage. I shall consider myself the luckiest man in the world if you do so," he spoke aloud, assuming the role of Dayanand.

"Well, Dayanandji, I will consider your request..."

Abhay had not completed his reply to the imaginary Dayanand when the real Dayanand stepped into his room. The gentleman had just returned from a business meeting and he was in a bad mood. Abhay's audacious words angered him. "Get out of my house!" he shouted at Abhay.

Abhay felt deeply ashamed. He left the house immediately. Servants of the household laughed at his plight.

Leaving the city behind, Abhay entered a forest. After some wandering he met a her-



mit. He lived in the hermit's cottage and served him. Three months passed.

"My boy, you are not made for this sort of life. Although you are here, your mind is in the city. You are dreaming of wealth and comfort. Why don't you go and work for the fulfilment of your dreams?" one day the hermit asked Abhay.

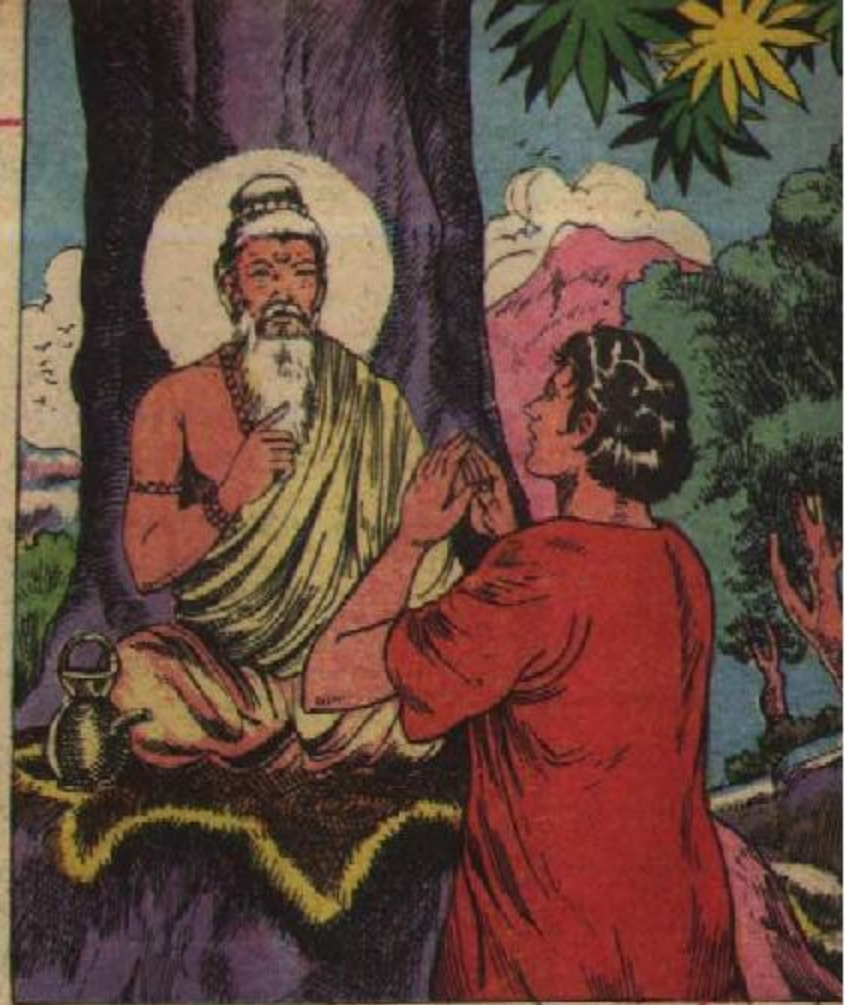
Abhay shed tears and narrated his misfortune to him. When the hermit sympathised with him, he asked, "Sir, can't you make me so great that Dayanandji will feel small and humble before me?"

"My boy, Dayanand has grown prosperous through sincere labour and concentration in his business. You should also develop such qualities."

The hermit's advice disappointed Abhay. "Sir, there is nothing new in what you said, What I expected of you is a boon," he said.

The hermit thought over the situation for a moment. Then he said, "Very well, my boy, I'll teach you a hymn. Recite it seven times and concentrate on your desire. The desire shall be fulfilled in a day or two."

Abhay was very happy. He



got the hymn by heart and prepared to leave the hermitage. The hermit told him at the time of his departure, "My son, man can get what he wants in two ways, in a natural way or in an unnatural way. One may achieve something in an unnatural way, but one must suffer the consequences." The hermit added, "The hymn I taught you shall be effective only three times; no more."

Abhay bowed to the hermit and left for Pataliputra. On arrival there after three days, he lay down on the veranda of an inn. It was night. He fell asleep and dreamt that Dayananda was



offering his daughter to him in marriage.

Abhay woke up at midnight and thought, "Why to keep the dream as a dream any longer? I can make it a reality!" He recited the hymn seven times, concentrated on his desire to marry Sushila, and fell asleep once again.

It was morning when he was woken up by the music of drums and sehnai. To his surprise, he saw Dayananda, accompanied by his friends, approaching him.

"Forget the past, son, and come home. Our family deity told me last night in a dream that I should offer Sushila in

marriage to you. Come, be pleased to ride the horse waiting outside," said Dayananda with humility.

Abhay greeted him and did as requested. He was married to Sushila within a week.

It was a great time for Abhay. He ate and slept to his heart's content and spent the rest of his time playing cards with friends and enjoying strolls.

But one evening he got a shock when he overheard what the servants said among themselves. "The chap was one like us till the other day. Now he bosses over us! However, the world knows that he is a good-





for-nothing idler!" said one. Another said, "We are greater than he, for we work for our livelihood. He does nothing except growing fat!"

Abhay observed that the servants laugh at him behind him and only make a show of obedience to him. He found the situation intolerable. He told Dayananda, "Sir, I want to take up some fruitful work."

"Very good. Why don't you manage a wing of my business?"

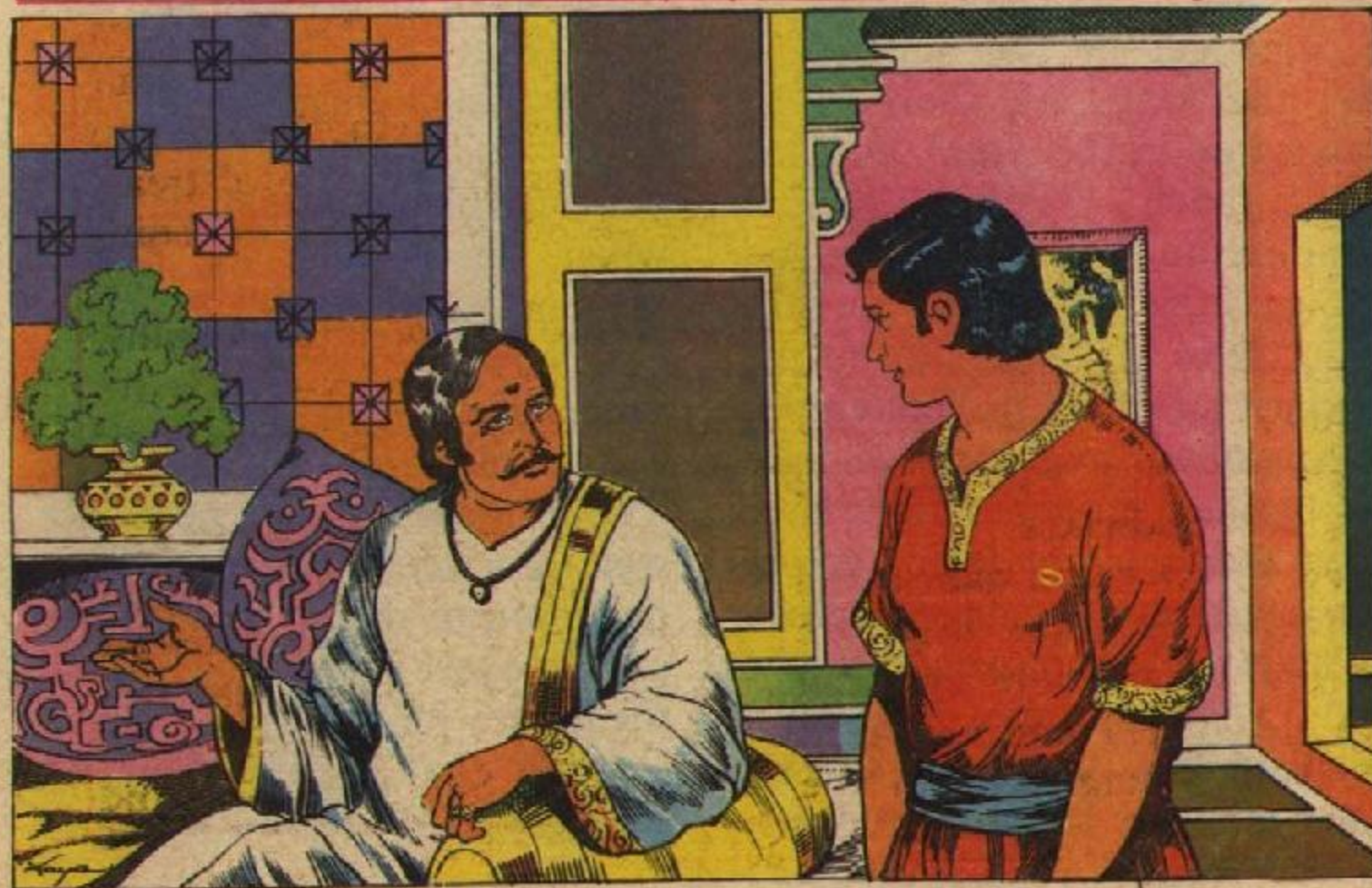
"No, sir. I'll like to start a business of my own. All I need is some capital."

"Take as much as you like!" said Dayananda encouragingly.

Abhay did not take much, but only enough to start a business in a modest way. At night he recited the hymn and wished to become the richest merchant in the city.

His wish began to fruition most rapidly. Every trade he took up yielded him lakhs of rupees. Nobody could understand how it happened, but it just happened! Dayananda was surprised at his son-in-law's fabulous prosperity. Abhay himself was no less surprised.

But soon Abhay became the eye-shore of all other traders of the city. They envied him. Some of them wielded much influence







in the King's court. They poisoned the King's ears against him.

One day he was summoned by the king. As soon as he appeared in the court, the king said rudely, "Young man! I understand that you began doing trade only a few months ago. Now you seem to be the richest merchant in Pataliputra. Some of our merchants who are in business for generations have lost everything by facing you in competition. You have amassed a huge amount of wealth. I give you a week's time. You must explain how you grew so rich and show me all your accounts.

Otherwise you shall forfeit half of your wealth to me. I am sure, you are doing some smuggling or are in collusion with bandits."

Abhay maintained no accounts, for he did not run his business in the normal way. He went back home without a word.

At night he dreamt that he had become the King! He sat up and thought of reciting the hymn and wishing to really become the king of Pataliputra. He would not be required to show his accounts to anybody or explain how he became rich. The idea was exciting.

He woke up his wife and told her what he thought. She showed no enthusiasm. She just said, "Did you not hope that your problems would be over when you became the richest man in Pataliputra?"

Abhay grew grave. He passed the night sleepless. In the morning he met the king and said, "Your Majesty, you need not wait for a week. You may forfeit three-fourth of my wealth. My only request is, you may spend the money for some good cause. I swear that I have done no smuggling, nor have I any con-



nection with any bandit."

The king was surprised. Without a word more Abhay left for the forest. He met the hermit on the third day and said, "O blessed soul, I have made use of your boon only twice. I have the power to use it for a third time, but I surrender the power to you."

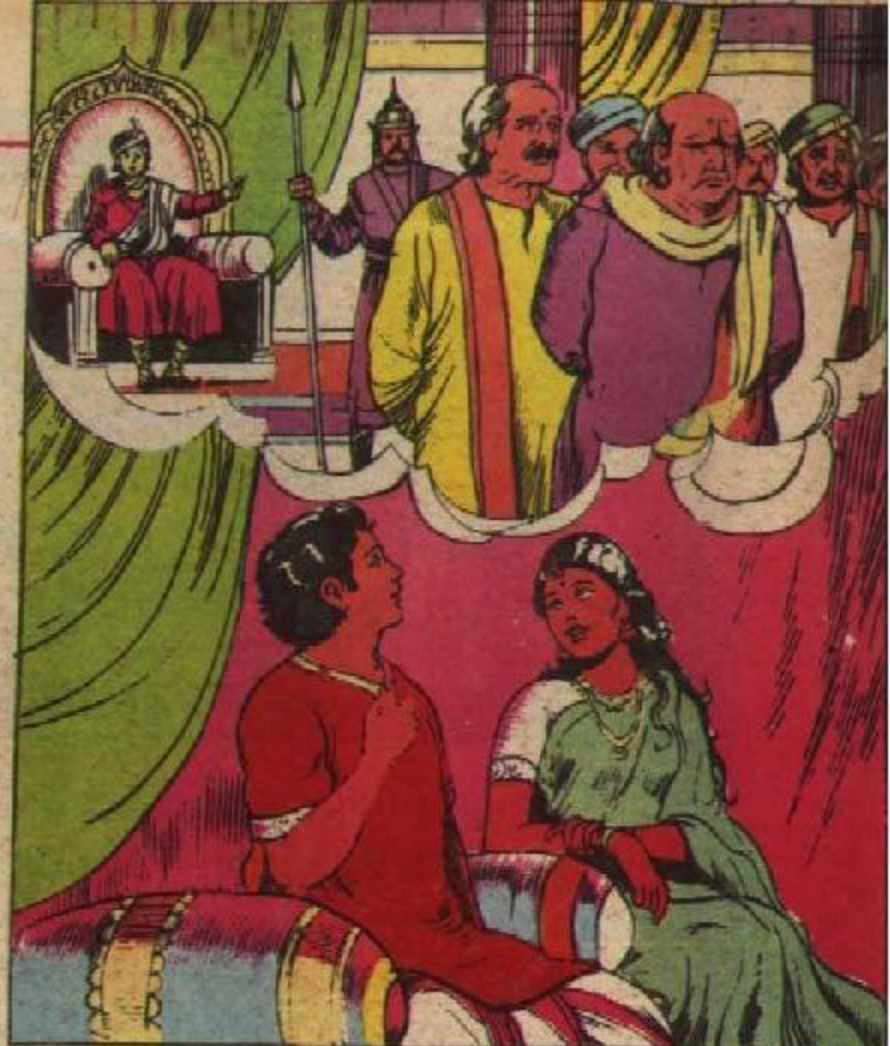
The hermit smiled and patted him on the back.

"Sir, I propose to leave Pataliputra. But, I shall come to meet you from time to time," Abhay said again.

"Welcome, my boy, welcome. You are really wise!" commented the hermit.

Back in the city, Abhay sent the promised wealth to the king. With the remaining wealth he left Pataliputra and settled down in a small town. He worked hard and earned well, though not fabulously. He lived a contented life.

The vampire paused for a moment and then demanded of King Vikram in a challenging tone: "O King, how could Abhay act that foolishly? Why did he give up the opportunity to become the King of Pataliputra? Why did he surrender his power to the hermit? And why



did he give away greater part of his wealth to the King? Answer me if you can. Should you keep mum despite your capacity to answer the questions, your head would roll off your neck."

King Vikram answered forthwith: "Far from acting foolishly, Abhay acted in his wisdom. He had realised what the hermit had said. There were two ways to achieve anything, natural and unnatural. Any success that comes through unnatural ways brings unforeseen problems with it. He became Dayananda's son-in-law, but was laughed at by Dayananda's servants. He became the richest man, but





that brought him enemies and the King's suspicion. Had he become a king, some new problems would have disturbed him. Maybe he would have faced an attack from another king or a rebellion from his own subjects. He decided to abandon the unnatural ways of achieving suc-

cess. He began his life as a normal merchant. He is lucky that his wife did not encourage him to become a king!"

No sooner had the King concluded his reply than the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

## WONDER WITH COLOURS







## THE POLICE CHIEF'S DILEMMA

Gurudutt had done everything to save his dying father, borrowing money from his neighbours. But, he did not succeed. After completing the funeral ceremonies he sold all his property and paid off his loans. Then he left his village and walked towards the town.

On the outskirts of the village, he was called by an aged man, who stood under a tree.

"Friend," said the stranger, "I am waiting here for some bullock-cart to arrive. I would like to hire one to go to the next town. I am old and alone—will you not please accompany me to the town?"

Gurudutt felt sympathetic.

"Surely, sir, I would be glad to help you in any way," he replied.

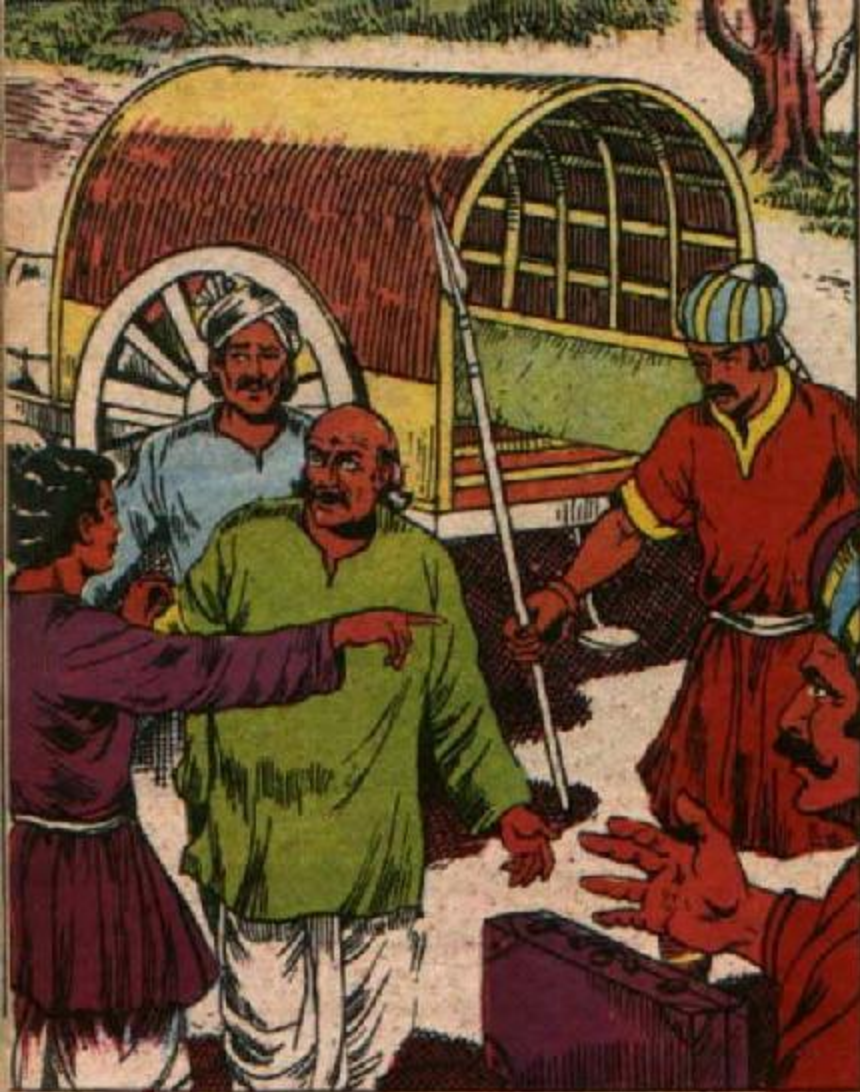
Just then a bullock-cart arrived on the scene. The old man climbed the cart and said, "Young man, will you please lift my trunk and keep it near the driver's seat?" Gurudutt obliged him and sat beside the old man.

After a long uncomfortable journey, they reached the main road which led to the town. As Gurudutt was about to get down from the cart, a policeman walked to him and asked, "From where are you coming?"

"From Navrangpur," replied Gurudutt.

"I would like to search your





belongings,” said the policeman. “You too must get down,” said the policeman looking at the old man.

“Sir, I am old and suffering from heart trouble too. I have to reach the doctor in the town as soon as possible. Please allow me to go,” said the old man, getting down from the cart.

You can go after I’ve searched your luggage,” replied the policeman. “Whose is this?” he asked, pulling a heavy trunk out.

“It is not mine, sir,” said the old man nonchalantly.

“But, sir, it belongs to him!” declared a surprised Gurudutt.

“Don’t tell lies, young man! Didn’t I see you putting it near my seat when I picked you up at Navrangpur?” shouted the carter.

The policeman became suspicious and forced open the trunk.

In fact, all the routes to the town had been blocked and all travellers were being searched by the police. That was because the household of the Zamindar of Navrangpur had been burgled the night before. The police expected the thief to come to the town with the booty.

As the policeman pushed aside the top layer of clothes in the trunk, he found a bundle containing gold ornaments and precious stones.

“I’ve caught you at last, you rogues! Come, come to the police-station, all of you!” shouted the policeman.

The Police Chief knew the carter very well. So, after some interrogation, he let him go. Now, when he questioned the two passengers, both said that they were not the owners of the trunk.

Puzzled, the Police Chief put them behind bars and went home.

He sat through midnight won-



dering how to find out the real thief.

Next morning, he approached Gurudutt and said, "Young man, we are sorry to have troubled you. The real thief was caught last night. You may go. Take your trunk with you."

"Sir, I am happy to be set free. But, sir, I cannot take the trunk for it does not belong to me," said Gurudutt politely.

Do not be afraid, young man, to take what really belongs to you," said the Chief as he placed the trunk in Gurudutt's arms.

Gurudutt was in a fix. But he saw that the only way to quit the police-station soon was to take the trunk with him. "Once I'm out, I shall return it to the old man," thought Gurudutt and he walked out carrying the trunk.

The Chief then went to the old man and said, "We are sorry, old man, to have suspected you. In the meantime the culprit who stole the Zamindar's jewellery has been nabbed in the next town. You are free to go on your journey."

"Thank you, thank you, sir. You are just and righteous," said the old man, but he did not seem to be in any hurry to go.



He looked in all directions.

"I gave the trunk to the young man who, as you said, was its owner," informed the Chief.

"Sir, has that chap left? When did he leave?" asked the old man, anxiety writ large on his face.

"He left only a few minutes ago," replied the Chief.

The old man ran in the direction in which Gurudutt had gone. Before long he found the young man relaxing on the verandah of a house.

"You rascal! Stealing my trunk, eh? How clever of you!" shouted the old man as he raised his hand to slap Gurudutt.

But, Gurudutt was swift and





avoided the blow. He was surprised that the man was not as old as he looked. He was strong and steady.

The man opened the trunk and saw to his horror that it was filled with clay balls. "What did you do to my ornaments and jewellery—fifteen pieces of them?" he shouted.

Just then the policemen who were hiding in the house pounced on the fellow and tied his hands behind his back. He was then dragged to the police-station.

The Chief gave a laugh and said, "So, you wanted to reclaim your trunk, did you? But had

you not declared that it was not yours? And how did you become sure that there were fifteen pieces?"

The Chief himself had removed the gold ornaments and filled the box with clay balls.

The thief was put behind bars. The Chief approached Gurudutt and said, "Young man, I am really proud of your honesty and your bravery. I am willing to give you a job in my department, if you are willing to accept it."

"Sir, there could not be a better offer for me. I am grateful to you," replied Gurudutt, bowing to him.

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## Temples of India

# TIRUPATI ON SESHACHALAM

Long long ago once Sage Narada described to Lord Vishnu the charm of the seven blue peaks of Seshachalam covered by lush green woods in the Eastern Ghat range of mountains.

A day came when Vishnu felt the need for breaking away from his surroundings. He descended on a peak of the Seshachalam hills and felt enchanted by the bounty of nature's beauty. He sat down for meditation and remained lost in trance.



Even after Vishnu left, an imprint of his image remained on a stone. His divine presence too was left in that image. Years passed. Bushes and ant-hills grew around the stone.





Ages later an amazing incident discovered the image to men. A cowherd boy who led his cattle to the hills observed that the best one of his cows climbed a particular peak regularly. Also, she failed to produce the quantity of milk expected of her.

To his surprise the cowherd saw the cow standing at a spot and milk flowing from her automatically on a bush-covered stone. The cowherd did not dare to go near it. Filled with awe he ran away.



The cowherd informed the local king of the strange happening. The king explored the hill-top and found an image of Vishnu. He had a temple built on a nearby hill for the image. A gifted sculptor made the image even more distinct.



In the household of the king a beautiful princess was born. Though her name was Padmavati, she was an emanation of Lakshmi—in search of the emanation of Vishnu now famous as Tirupati Balaji.



Lord Tirupati loved to assume a human form and wander in the hills. One day, while doing so, he met Padmavati. Both recognised each other. The heavenly couple re-enacted their marriage on earth. Padmavati is worshipped in Her temple at the foot of the hill.

The temple of Tirupati is one of the most famous temples in India. Great kings have contributed to the reconstruction and enlargement of the temple. Its Vimana is covered with gold. Its background is picturesque.

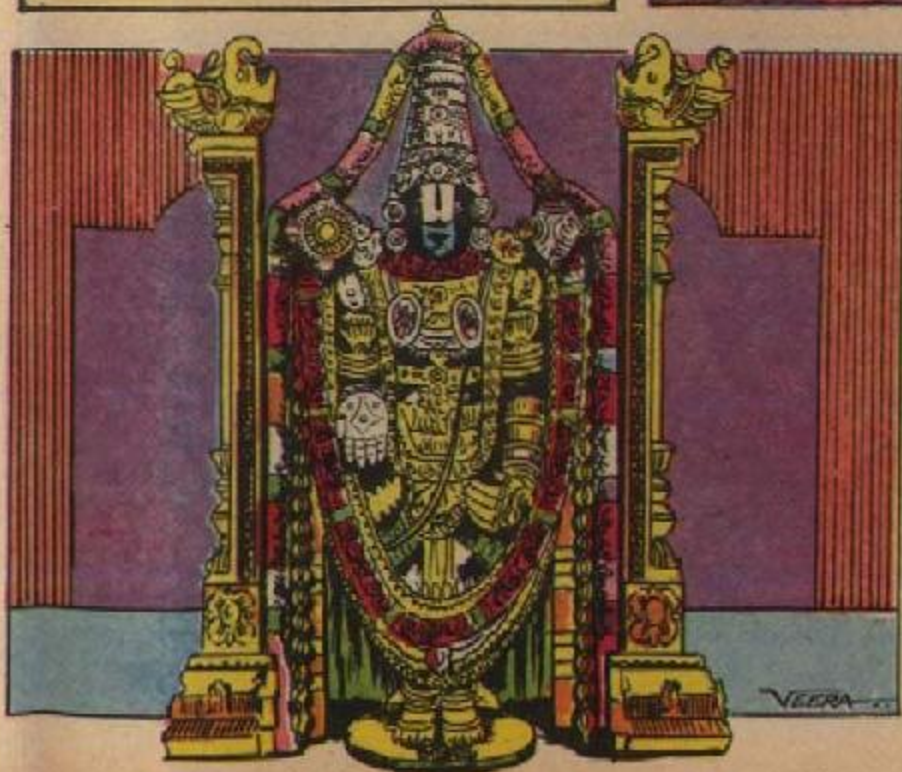






There is a never-ending stream of devotees visiting the shrine. They put their offerings in a Hundi. Numerous educational and health-care institutions and charities are run by the funds collected from the devotees.

Legends say that Rama, Sita and Lakshmana had visited the Deity. Swamitirtha is the name of the spot where they had spent some time. Of other holy places, the most enchanting is the peak on which Vishnu had first descended. The high spot is marked by His Lotus Feet carved on the stone.



The Deity is indescribably beautiful and His smile is steeped in Divine Compassion. The image, of course, remains bedecked in valuable ornaments most of the time. To have a Darshan of Lord Tirupati Balaji is at once a joy and a benediction.



# KARTAVIRYA

## DESTROYED BY HIS OWN THOUSAND ARMS

Kartavirya ruled his kingdom from the city of Mahismati on the river Narmada.

He had only one aim in life; to be immensely powerful. His concept of power was, he should be able to do anything he wished with his own hands.

He pleased the great sage Dattatreya and with his blessings was endowed with a thousand arms. He was now very proud and happy. Once while bathing in the river, he had a fancy to see if he could not stop the flow of the river with his thousand arms. He tried and succeeded.

A mile away, Ravana on his way to Lanka from a war, was camping on the river-bank. The river swelled because its flow had been blocked. As a result Ravana's camp was flooded.

The angry Ravana tried to trace the cause of the deluge and found out Kartavirya. After some exchange of angry words, both became locked in a fight. Ravana was grabbed by a thousand hands and accepted defeat. Both became friends afterwards.

Kartavirya grew more and more proud. One day he let fire destroy a forest without first ascertaining whether there were inhabitants in it or not. It so happened that a hermit named Apava lived in it. His hermitage went up in flames.

"You are proud of your thousand arms, are you? You deserve to lose all of them" said the sage casting a curse.

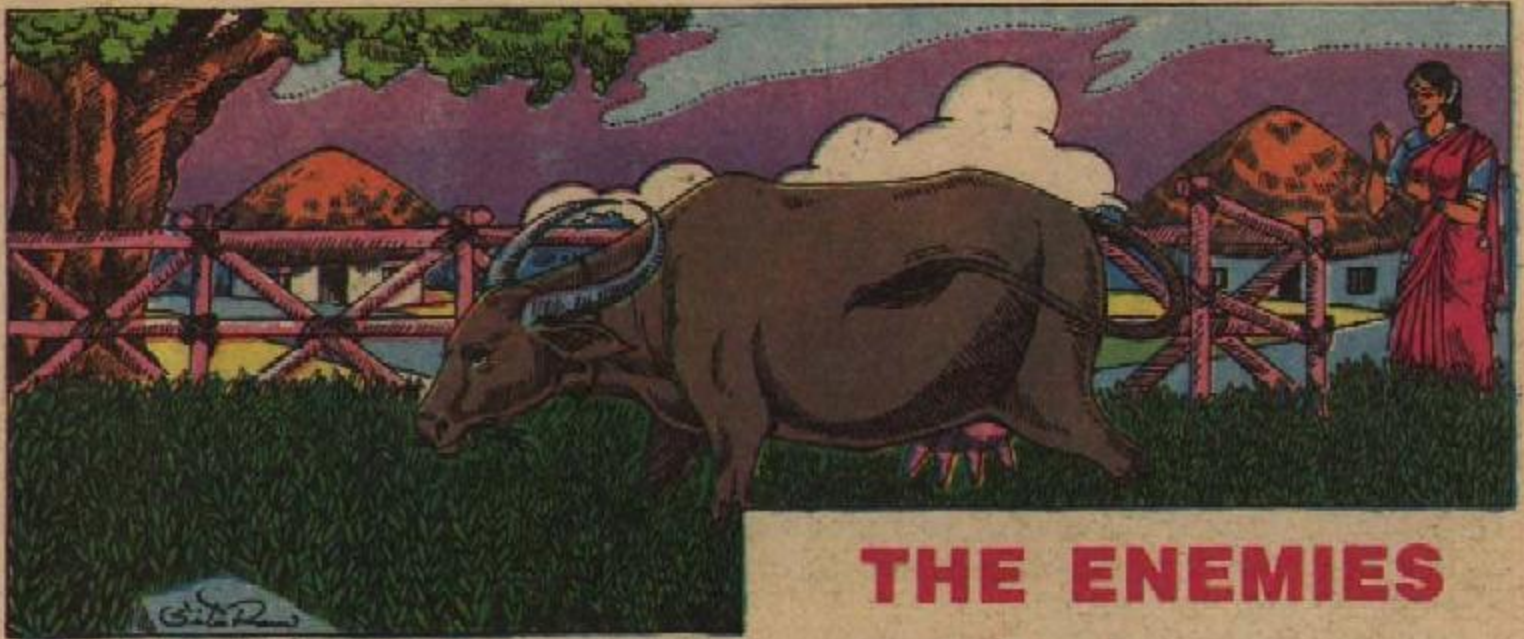
Soon thereafter Kartavirya had the audacity to claim Kamadhenu, the wish-fulfilling cow, from the Ashram of Sage Jamadagni. The cow made good her escape to heaven, but the king killed Jamadagni.

That sealed Kartavirya's fate. Parasurama, the illustrious son of Jamadagni, wreaked vengeance on the king: he axed all the arms of Kartavirya before beheading him.

Sages said that what destroyed Kartavirya was his own pride in his power—symbolised by a thousand arms.







## THE ENEMIES

**H**er name was Madhavi. But, her name should have been 'The razor-tongued', for, she was notorious for her quick temper, sharp tongue and quarrelsome nature. Even her husband, Subhash, could not mend her ways, for she was in the habit of doing exactly the opposite of what she was asked to do.

The only creature that Madhavi loved and did not get angry with was her buffalo which used to give her a lot of milk. She gave it good green grass everyday and bathed it every evening.

Madhavi noticed her neighbour's kitchen-garden grown luxuriant. At night she led her buffalo into it. By early morning the buffalo had finished half of the crop and uprooted most of the remaining.

The owner of the field, Govind, saw the buffalo in the morning but did not make any hue and cry. He decided, however, to teach Madhavi a good lesson. He ploughed his field once again and planted some poisonous creepers. Once again the field wore a luxuriant look.

Madhavi could not contain her mischief and once again she led her buffalo into Govind's field. Alas! by morning, the buffalo lay in a swoon. Even when it was revived, it stopped eating or giving milk. A few days later it died.

"I'll not stay in this village any longer! People here are jealous of me. They tried to kill my poor, innocent buffalo. I'll go away to my father's village," screamed out Madhavi.



Subhash did not know what to do. He followed Madhavi quietly.

Outside the village, there was a big lake and Madhavi saw a few fishermen angling in it. She saw Rama, her familiar fisherman, filling up his basket with fish. "Oh! how lucky these people are" said Madhavi. "They earn so much so easily!" She approached Ramu and put her hand into his basket, wanting to take out of it a fish.

"Oh! Oh! my finger, my finger!" she cried and pulled out her hand, followed by a crab dangling from it. She jerked her finger free of the crab and said angrily, "What a stupid fisherman you are! Why do you keep both the fish and the crabs in the same basket?"

The fisherman said, "Dear sister, why do you get angry with me? Don't you know that the fish and the crabs live together in the lake? So will they in my basket! But why blame the crab? If you, a human being, cannot change your nature, how do you expect the crab to do so?"

"I am leaving my village. All have become my enemies here,"



shouted Madhavi.

"But, sister, you are carrying your enemies with you!" commented Ramu.

"What do you mean?" asked Madhavi angrily.

"I will tell you frankly what I mean. I don't care for your wrath, but I care for you. Your own mischief, greed, jealousy are your real enemies. Wherever you go they will make your life hell, as long as you have not thrown them out of yourself. Tell me, sister, what business had you to destroy Govind's kitchen-garden? You paid the price with your buffalo, didn't you?" said Ramu.





"Do you think I've time to answer a vagabond like you? I'm going. I must go away to my father's house."

"Well, sister, go wherever you want to go. Don't waste your time. Go, go," said Ramu calmly but forcefully.

"Why should I go? Am I at your command that I will go away because you ask me to go repeatedly?" shouted Madhavi and she turned her back on Ramu and marched towards her home, followed by Subhash. Subhash was happy that Madha-

vi did not go to her father's house and make a scene there.

But, as days passed, Subhash had more reasons to be happy. Ramu's words had sunk deep into Madhavi's mind. She had realised that it does not pay to be envious and mischievous. It does not pay to be quarrelsome either. By and by she changed her ways and became good to her neighbours. Peace prevailed not only in the family and in the village but also in her own heart. And that was very important.

In the restaurant a customer sipped tea and then sprinkled the last few drops of it on the restaurant manager's head, while paying the bill.

"What's this?" demanded an angry manager.

"This is a mental disease with me. I feel so embarrassed about it!" explained the customer.

"You should go and see a psychiatrist," advised the manager.

The customer agreed to do so.

After three months he was back and sipped tea and sprinkled the last few drops on the manager once again.

"What Did you not see a psychiatrist?"

"Of course I did! He cured me of my embarrassment!" sportively-replied the customer.





## ONE'S VALUE

**I**ndrasen was a noble king. He made all efforts to see that his people lived happily and in prosperity. He tried to provide suitable jobs to all those who needed them. And yet there were a few lazy fellows who preferred begging to hard work.

Amongst the beggars was a young man named Ravikumar. He had learnt begging from his early childhood. So, even though he was physically fit and able, he chose to live on alms.

One day, as usual, Ravikumar went out on his round. He went through most of the lanes in the town, but failed to get any food or money. Hungry and tired he sat down, under a tree. He pleaded the passers by to take pity on him and to give him some money. But, everyone turned a deaf ear to him. Then it

occurred to him that if he prayed to God he might help him. He cried aloud, "O God, grant me food and give me money. Bless me with lot of wealth!"

He called aloud his prayers repeatedly. He waited for some time. There seemed to be no response from God. Hungry that he was, he became frustrated and angry with God. He then started abusing him. "God! Are you deaf to my prayers? You are heartless, cruel and incapable of helping me. I shall never again pray to you!"

Just then King Indrasen was passing by and he heard Ravikumar's abuses.

"Whom are you abusing, young man?" asked the king gently.

"Whom else but the good for







nothing God,” replied Ravikumar in a curt manner.

“I am the king of this place,” said King Indrasen. “I can help you in any manner.”

Ravikumar gave a start.

“Can you give me enough money so that I may ever live happily?” he asked.

“Surely. I can give you one thousand rupees if you are ready to cut off and give me one of your arms. If you donate to me one of your legs I shall reward you with rupees five thousand. And, if you are willing to part with both your eyes, I am ready to offer you half of my kingdom,” said the king.

“Oh no! Impossible! I am not

ready to give you any part of my body even for the whole kingdom. Pardon me, my lord,” said Ravikumar.

“So, you see young man, God has given you such an immensely valuable thing as your body which is worth more than my kingdom. Should you not be grateful to him for that? Now, should you not utilise your God—given wealth and live by hard work instead of begging and wasting your natural wealth?” asked the king.

The king’s advice went deep into Ravikumar’s heart. He abandoned begging and took to hard work—which brought him far more happiness and joy than he had ever known.

History is a record of human progress, a record of the struggle of the advancement of the human mind, of the human spirit, toward some known or unknown objective.

—Jawaharlal Nehru





# NO MONKEY BUSINESS

"Grandpa, I came across a strange expression today. We had been to the restaurant near the harbour. I heard one sailor demanding of another, 'What were you doing? *Sucking the monkey*, eh?' I don't understand how one can do that" Rajesh sounded intrigued.

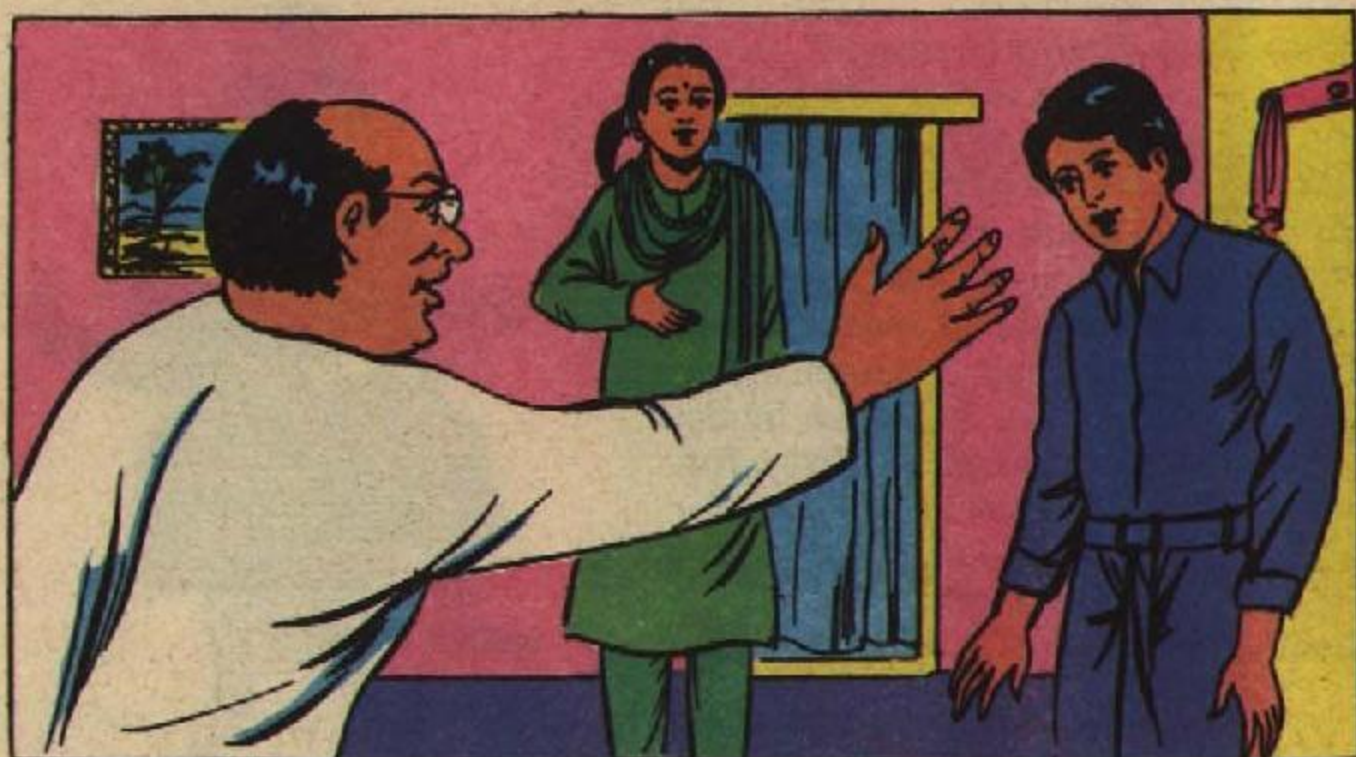
Grandpa Chowdhury laughed. "It is a sailor's slang for sucking liquor from a cask through a straw, surreptitiously, of course. The sailor who uttered the slang might have suspected that his friend was drinking, hiding from him."

"The slang seems to be devoid of any logic" observed Rajesh.

"Yes, you cannot expect logic from a slang. No doubt, there is always some situation giving rise to a slang, but the situation is forgotten, the word or the phrase lives," said Grandpa.

"But all the phrases featuring the monkey are certainly not illogical. *Monkey tricks*, for example, meaning mischievous or deceitful actions," said Reena.

"Right, but that phrase is no slang. For your information, the word *Monkey* itself is used in slang meaning £ 500 or \$ 500; also for a mortgage. *To get one's monkey up* means to get angry, generally at some easy provocation. Once a slang, this has become a normal idiomatic expression. *Make a monkey of* means to make a fool of. Now a days you read another expression frequently, *Have a monkey on one's back*, that is, to be addicted to drugs," said Grandpa Chowdhury.







## LET US KNOW

**What is the meaning of Mizoram? Which town is its Capital?**

*Vikram Pandey, Patna*

*Mi* means man and *Zo* means mountain. Mizoram means the land of the mountain-dweller. The capital of this Union Territory is Aijal, a picturesque town built in tiers upward along the hill.

**Is it a fact that marble used for the construction of the Taj Mahal came from Persia and Italy?**

*(Miss) Sudha Rani Mandal, Midnapore*

No. The Marble for the Taj Mahal was gathered from Makrana in Jodhpur of Rajasthan. Persian and Italian architects were involved in its construction.

**What does Samurai mean?**

*Joseph M., Trivandrum*

The military class of old Japan. The Samurai were attached to feudal princes and were known for their allegiance to their masters and preparedness to risk their lives to protect the honour of their masters. They carried swords. The Japanese feudal system was abolished in 1971. The Samurai were forbidden to carry swords. Seven years later, title *Samurai* was changed to *Shizoku* (gentry).





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## PICKS FROM THE WISE

The bell never rings of itself; unless someone handles it or moves, it is dumb.

We all, when we are well, give good advice to the sick.

Anger is momentary madness; so control your passion or it will control you.

The brave find a home in every land.

— *Latin Proverbs*

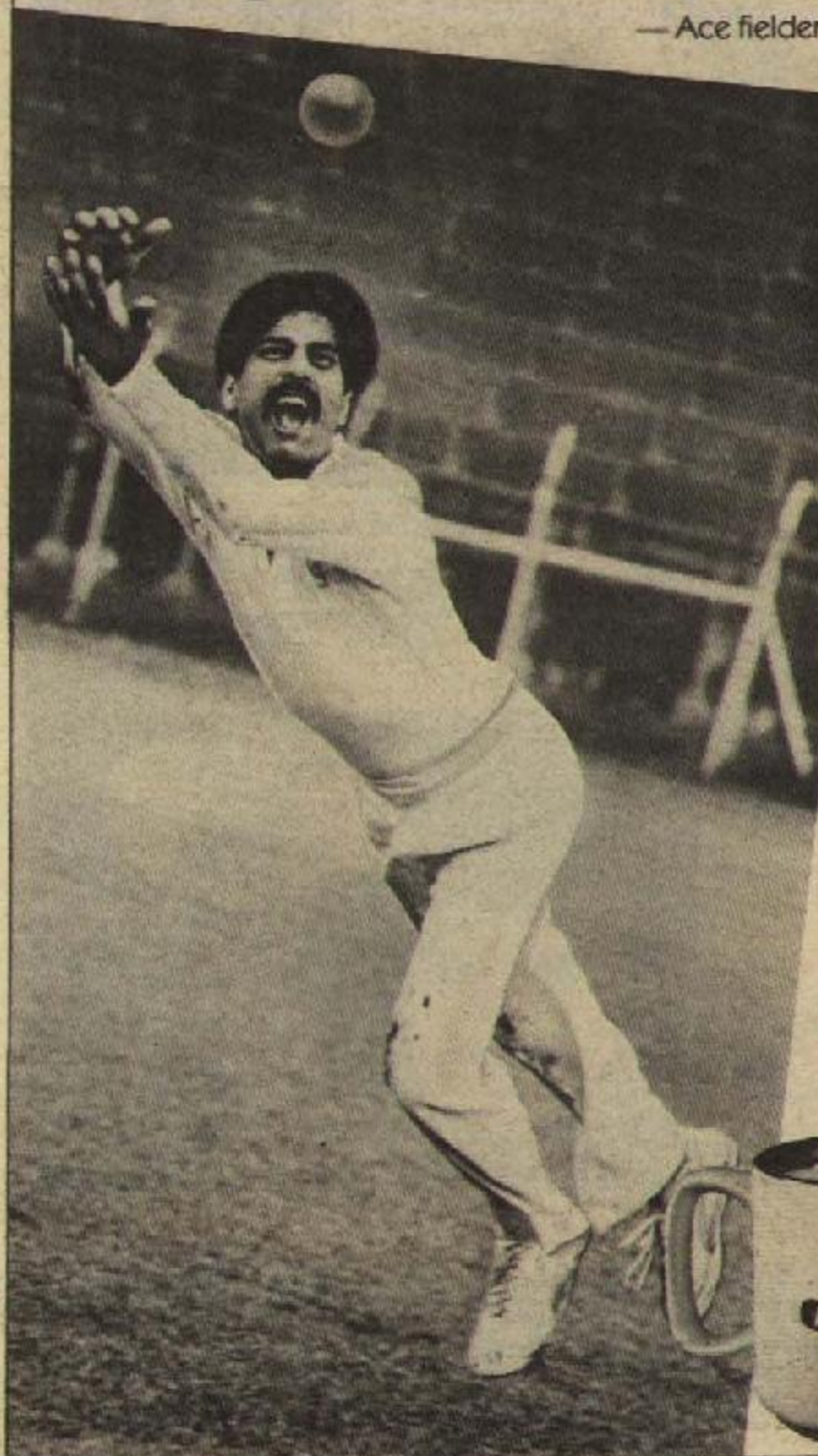
All but God is changing day by day.

— *Charles Kingsley*



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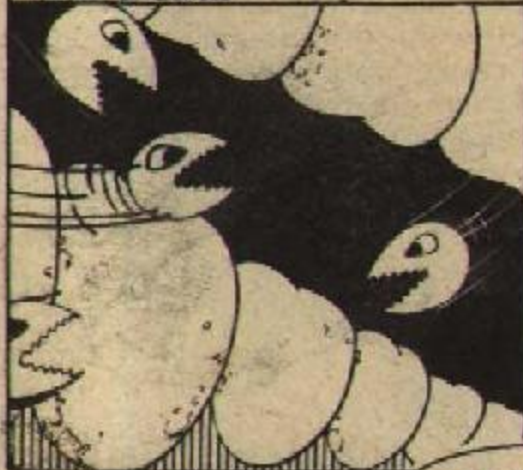


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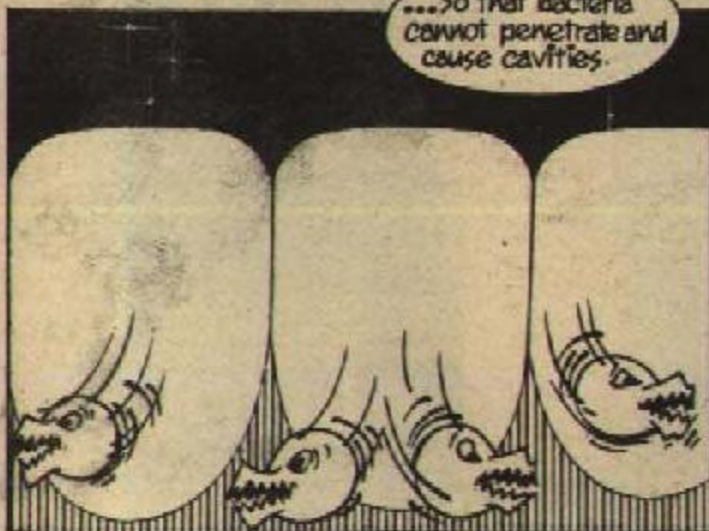
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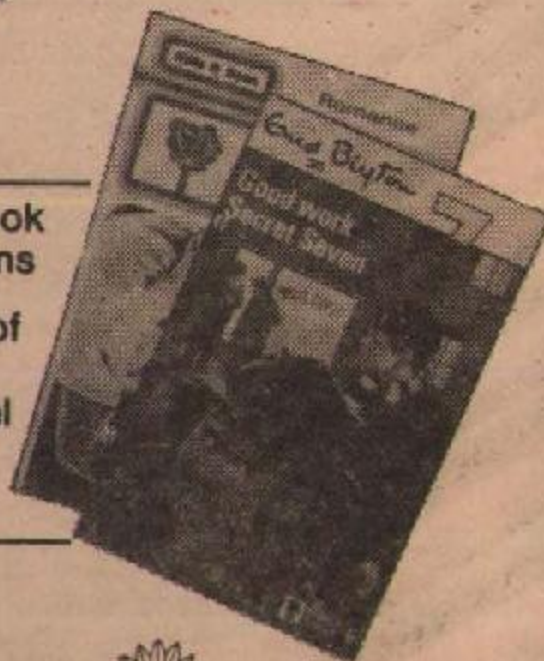
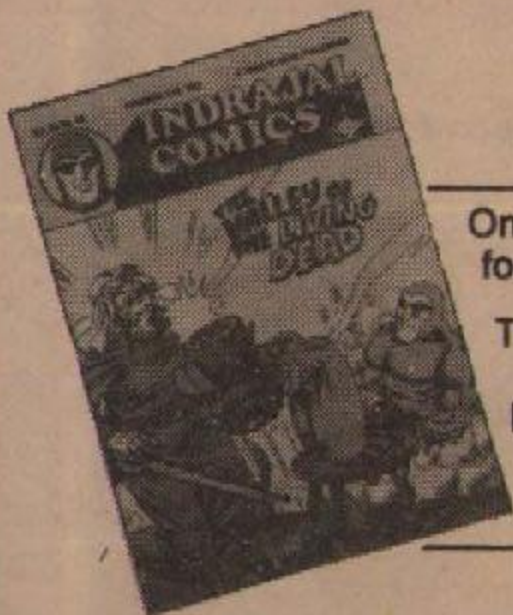
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